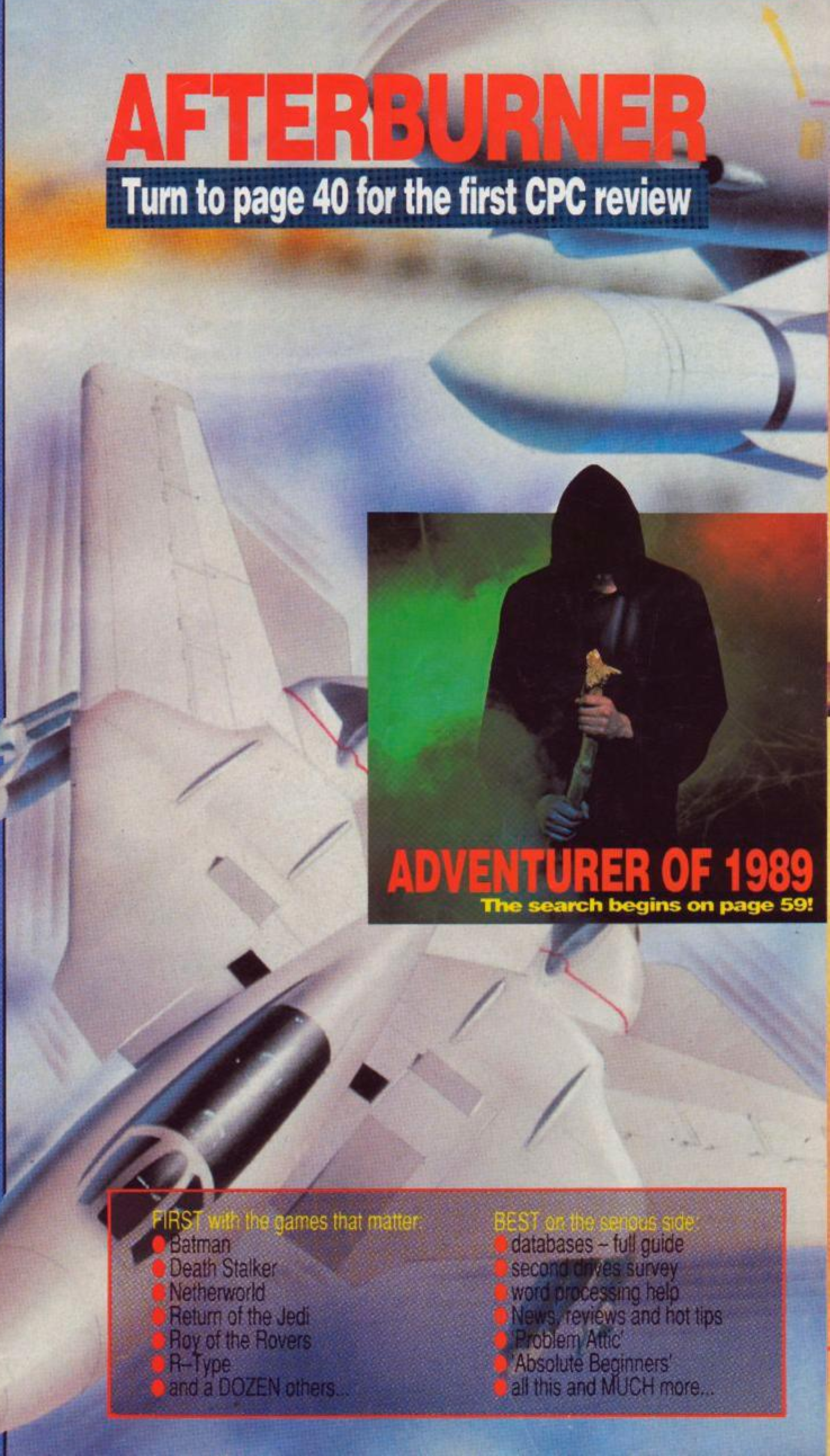
BRITAIN'S LEADING MAGAZINE FOR THE AMSTRAD CPC 464 ● 664 ● 6128

ISSUE 41 ● FEBRUARY 1989 ● £1.25

NOT an official Amstrad publication!

AMSTRAD ACTION

THE MOULD-BREAKING MAGAZINE FROM FUTURE PUBLISHING



AFTERBURNER

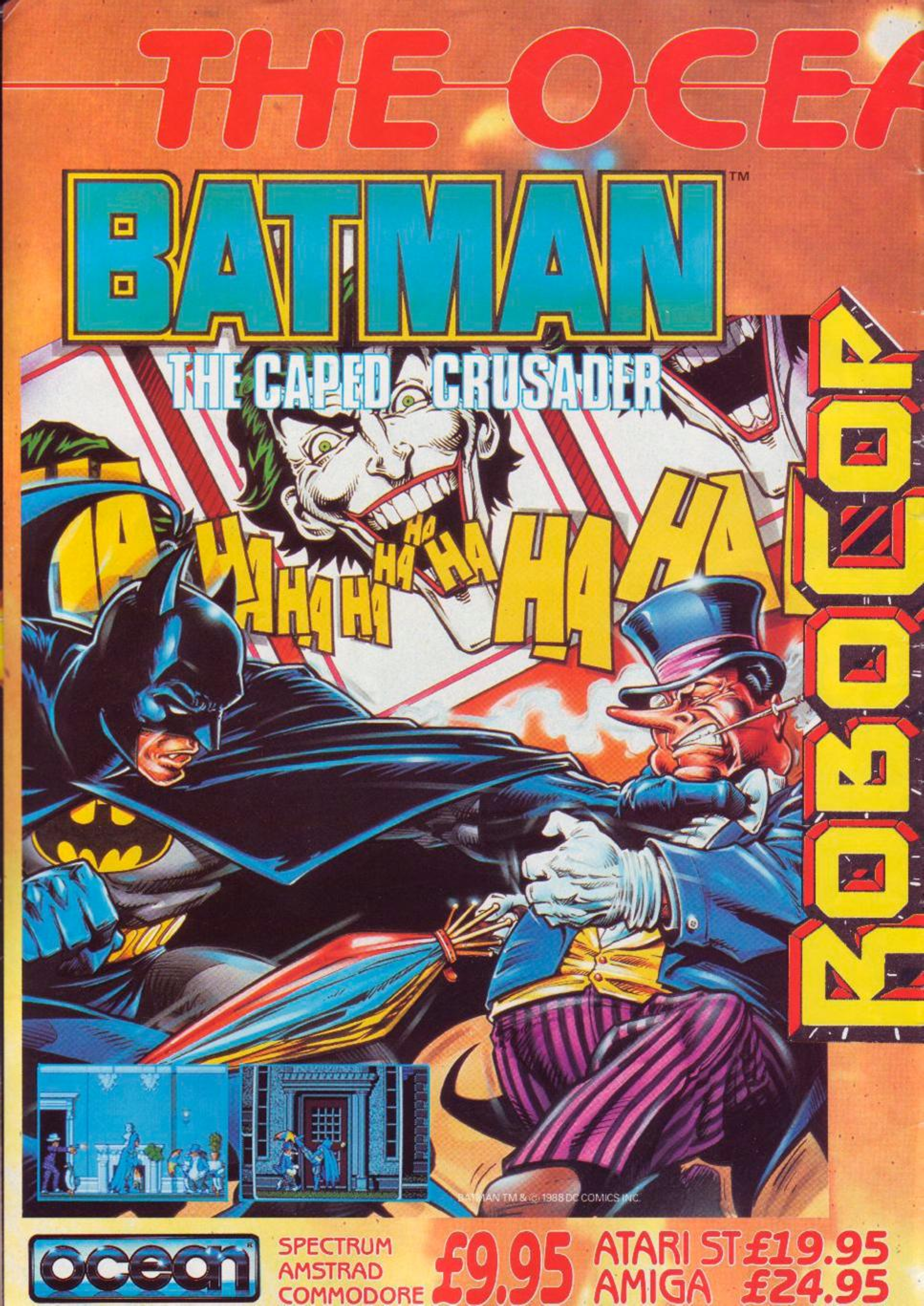
Turn to page 40 for the first CPC review

ADVENTURER OF 1989

The search begins on page 59!

FIRST with the games that matter:
- Batman
- Death Stalker
- Netherworld
- Return of the Jedi
- Roy of the Rovers
- R-Type
- and a DOZEN others...

BEST on the serious side:
- databases – full guide
- second drives survey
- word processing help
- News, reviews and hot tips
- 'Problem Attic'
- 'Absolute Beginners'
- all this and MUCH more...


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THE LINE UP

AMSTRAD ACTION ● FEBRUARY 1989

FRONT END

NEWS●LETTERS

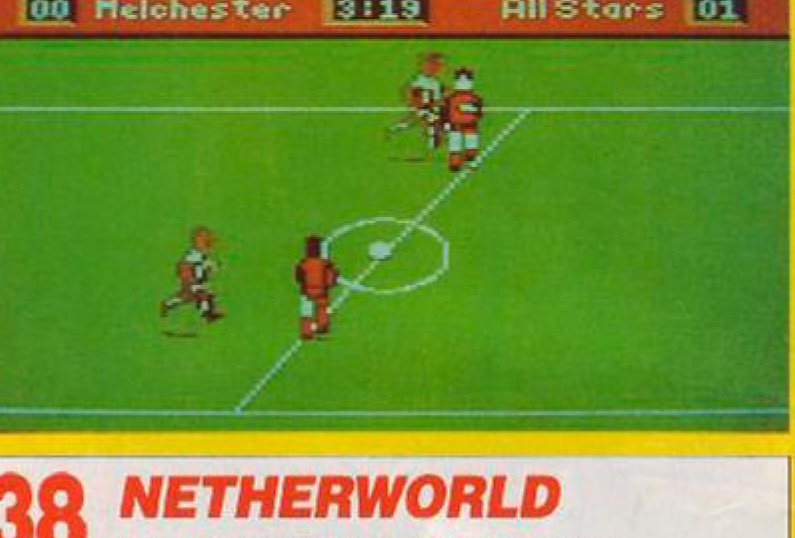
SERIOUS SIDE

SOFTWARE●HARDWARE●PROGRAMMING



THE ACTION BEGINS ON 38!

ALL THE TOP CPC GAMES

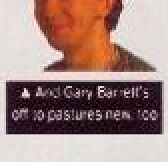








▲ Departing art person Sally 'Captain' Meddings



▲ And Gary Barrett's off to pastures new, too

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ACTION TEST





GOODBYE FROM THEM!

Have a good Christmas, I hope? We certainly did, thanks to your overwhelmingly positive reaction to last month's issue, with Incentive's *Total Eclipse* and all the other goodies. It's great to know we're appreciated!

It's appropriate that a New Year should see changes taking place in *Amstrad Action*. Art assistant Sally 'Captain' Meddings is taking off – promoted to art editor on *8000 Plus*, another of Future's fabulously successful titles. She'll be much missed. Secondly, games reviewer extraordinaire Gary 'GBH' Barrett is calling it a day. He arrived 16 issues ago, at the same time as Mac – a Macintosh SE – and has survived a good deal longer (we've now upgraded our Mac system). In that period we conservatively estimate that he's evaluated some *200 CPC* games, which is quite enough for any sane person (let alone Gary) to cope with. He's been rewarded with a post on another Future title. Pat, myself and the rest of us wish him all the best.

We'll introduce his replacement next month... See you then!

Steve



WRAPPING UP

WHAT TO BUY●BYE!

AMSCENE

CPC news

Where did our disks go?

Fears that 3" disk shortages are making an unwelcome comeback are leading once again to misinformed speculation about the future of the CPC range.

Mike Mordecai, Amsoft development manager, told *AA*: 'Stocks weren't frozen: we simply ran out of the things. We haven't been able to supply them'. It seems that demand for 3" disks has greatly exceeded expectations. Explained Mordecai: 'The reason we ran out was simply bad planning. Sales have been good, steady throughout the year. They built up to Christmas, but just as we thought that the peak had been reached, demand went through the roof.'

'Shortage will recur'

And he suggests that the best way to avoid similar problems in the future is for bulk users to keep Amsoft informed: 'The shortage will recur', he predicts, 'if we have no response from software houses and duplicators of their needs. That way we can gauge demand. All year round there's no word, and suddenly everybody wants 3" disks. The fact that Maxell 3" disks also disappeared didn't help.'

Steven Burke of SJB (official distributors of UK disks) admitted to *AA*: 'It's affected us terribly over the last couple of weeks: we are official dealers for disks, and now they've run out there's not an awful lot to do.

'There's been no 'stitch-up' about it. We knew about the problem a year ago, when Amstrad informed us of their stock levels. A shortage was anticipated for this Christmas. Everyone knew it was going to happen.

'At present we're buying back disks from France and Germany, and reselling them to regular customers. We're not making any profit on them, it's an exercise in good will. As far as Joe Public goes, there shouldn't be any problems. They've got the system disks and bundled software. No, it's these software houses that haven't done business with us before, suddenly screaming for disks.' Who exactly? 'Just some software houses, I'm not prepared to name names.

'The situation has been blown out of proportion in some quarters. We'll have stocks again soon – I believe that Amstrad are renegotiating a contract for further supplies. The situation should be back to normal before too long. One knock-on effect though will be a rise of 40-50p in disk prices. I mean that retailers will generally have to stick to the offical price of £29 per pack of ten, rather than discounting.'

Disk cussing

On the buyers' side, Codemasters PR man Bruce Everiss confirmed to *AA* that Amsoft 3" disks are likely to be in short supply for a time to come. Codemasters have been forced to buy in 'a bulk order' from the continent. 'We just couldn't get the disks. There's none at all in Britain. We usually pay £1.20 per disk, but the best offer we got was £2.30. People who have supplies are sitting on them.'

P.S. Whether it's an indirect result of the disk shortage or not, here at AA we've had reports that those nasty 'cheap and tackies' are beginning to resurface in high street stores. Avoid them if you possibly can.

Small business – *big boost*

SD Microsystems, who produce small business software exclusively for the CPC, have announced a brand new integrated system for 128K machines. The *Stock Accounting System* is based around a stock control program to handle the everyday business, with an invoicing program and sales ledger built in, plus printing routines to make hard copies of documents.

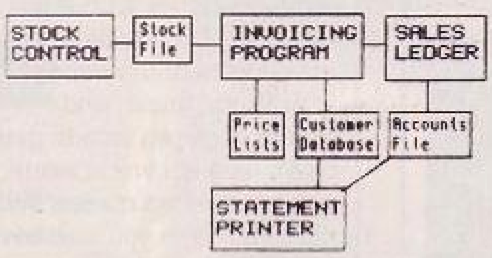
Main features include up to 750 lines of stock; calculation of trade discounts; printing of price lists; customer file storing 99 main names and addresses (but remember the Data Registration Act!); and automatic or manual payment reconciliation modes in sales ledger.

SD Microsystems are also setting up a Small Traders Club. Membership will be by an annual subscription of about £10, for which SD intends to supply help and advice in the setting up and running of small businesses, as well as cheap updates, discount supplies of disks, ribbons etc, and a small quarterly newsletter.

Previously SD Microsystems have offered excellent advice and backup, and there's every reason to expect standards to be maintained.

The *Stock Accounting System* is available on disk only for all 128K CPCs at £39.95. (If you bought the *Small Traders Pack* or *Invoicer* programs you can upgrade for £19.95.) Contact SD Microsystems ☎ 0462 675106, or write to SC Microsystems, PO Box 24 Hitchin, Herts. Tell 'em *AA* sent you.

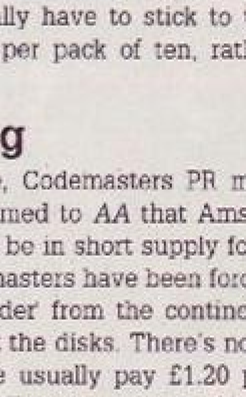
● And look out for the full review of the *Stock Accounting System* in *AA* soon!



System Integration Diagram

Qualitas enhanced

Qualitas, a print enhancer that allows you to define what typestyle your printer uses, has long been an invaluable CPC accessory. The problem was it didn't work under CPM – bad news for *WordStar* or *CPM+ Protext* users. Now the situation has been resolved. The *Utility Pack for CPM Plus* costs £9.95,



and works comfortably within the CPM operating system. (Note: 464/664 users have to upgrade to CPM+ to use the system: you can't have everything!)

The code for the utility can be embedded directly in the BIOS, so that it works with virtually any CPM+ program. It has been especially configured for *CPM+ Protext*, and can be set to automatically install before running the word processor.

Only one font is available at a time within the wordprocessor, but there is a facility to print files in a standalone form enabling two fonts to be used together.

To obtain a copy of the *Utility Pack* talk to Seven Stars Software (☎06284 3445).

Micronet gets chop

In an effort to boost sales of its online service Micronet, Telemap has declared a price reduction. Until March 31 people can join at £9.95 for their first quarter, rather than £20. (Mind you, you'll still have to pay the full price for the other three quarters.)

Micronet also have some good cheap modems, interfaces and software still on offer. If you pay the full amount for a year, you get a free modem: and you can buy the ProPak, interface and *Cage Comms ROM* for £226.35.

ACU/ CPCC sells out

Amstrad Computer User – which only last month, we reported, merged with *CPC Computing* (which used to be called *Computing with the CPC*, and which itself merged with *Amtix* some time before that...) Still with us? Anyway, *ACU* has been sold by its publishers Europress to Focus Magazines, who own *Popular Computing Weekly* and *Computer Games Week*.

Will this stop the letters we receive complaining about the merger? Nope.

Phone home

You know how it is, you're a Busy Executive in America needing to connect with Telecom Gold. Suddenly your problem is solved when the Dialcom Group launch Travel-Link. Now all you have to do find a Telenet access point (there's a list available) and enter 'C GOLDIxx' (xx is the Telecom Gold system number).

The service cost 20p per minute on top of the normal Telecom Gold rate, but of course you don't care about that because you're a Busy Executive on expenses. For more information call Dialcom: ☎ 01 493 3847

Star takes tumble

Star Micronics Ltd has announced a new rock bottom price of £1989 (plus VAT) for its LaserPrinter 8. Unusually it appears to approach its claimed printing speed of eight pages a minute (most stated speeds are highly and hilariously exaggerated – hilarious, that is, until you trying achieving them!). Basic specification is 1Mb of onboard memory, and four different printing protocols (Epson, IBM, HP and Diablo).

There is also a new font cartridge for the printer. This contains Helvet Proportional, Tms Rmn Proportional, Lineprinter and Tax Line Draw. The former pair can be used in medium, bold or italics in various point sizes. There are now seven cartridges available with various typestyles: only two of them, however, can be connected to the printer at the same time. Each module costs £99.

Additional strap-ons include a further 1Mb of memory, costing £239 and giving the capability to print a full page of graphics at 300 dots per inch. And a large capacity A4 hopper, allowing 125 minutes of printing (just say 1000 copies), is £595.

● *You wouldn't believe this, but we actually had someone complaining to us that we never cover laser printers. If the above is anything to go by, you can appreciate why.*

● Compumart are giving away a £30 starter pack with with their range of Amstrad, Citizen and Panasonic printers. The starter packs contain 1000 sheets of listing paper, an extra ribbon and an interface cable. For more details contact: Compumart Ltd, Jubilee Drive, Loughborough, LE11 0XS ☎ 0509 610444

● *In case you were after Epson's new address: Campus 100, Maylands Avenue, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire HP2 7EZ.*

Ash Nazg Durbatuluk*

Virgin/Mastertronic have just released the latest in a long line of Tolkien related products, *War in Middle Earth*. Previous games based the *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* are: *The Hobbit*, *Fellowship of the Ring* and *Shadows of Mordor* – all three adventures which tried to get too much out of the CPC.



▲*War in Middle Earth* – Hobbit forming?

War in Middle Earth takes a more tactical approach and turns out to be a fantasy wargame. It costs £9.99 for tape or 14.99 for the disk to have a go at defeating Sauron.

(* one ring to rule them all)



● Cliff Richard, video freak. Would we lie to you? (Don't answer that)

'They're making this up', we can hear you say as you read this: 'they've just *got* to be making this up'. Not a bit of it.

Fresh-faced wholesome cute Christian popster Cliff Richard is a video games freak. Cliff, whose appalling 'Mince pies and wine' (shouldn't that be 'whine'?) was terrorising the nation's youth all over the festive period, apparently relaxes backstage with a blast of the macho Imagine shoot-em-up *Guerilla Wars*. This unlikely tale was revealed in the *Manchester Evening News* (Sunday, 29 October), and naturally Imagine were keen to pass on the Good News (oops sorry Cliff).

To ze Manor born

Lankhor is a French software house soon to release their first CPC game, *Mortville Manor*. The adventure sports speech synthesis throughout and there's also some digitally sampled music and sound effects played during the game.

For now all we have are some French screen shots, but we'll bring you the full and definitive CPC review at the earliest opportunity.


▲*Mortville Manor*: coming soon to these shores – in English, we hope!

Puffin' iron

UBI Soft proudly present *Iron Lord*, a medieval style strategy games where you have to try and reclaim your kingdom from the hands of your brutal uncle; and *Puffy's Saga*, an arcade game set in an alien world made up of numerous mazes. You play Puffy and you also have your girlfriend with you, Puffyn. Avoid the traps and escape the maze or die.


▲UBI Soft's latest offering: *Iron Lord*. Many Knights of fun in store!

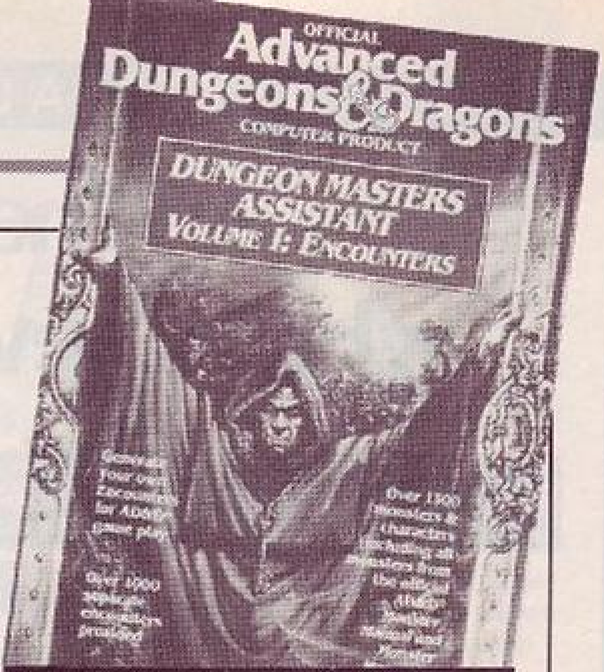
Assistance for the master

US Gold's next release in conjunction with the Advanced Dungeons and Dragons (AD&D) licence is the first volume of the Dungeon Masters Assistant series, *Encounters*.

It's designed to help the poor Dungeon Master (DM) to write adventures and encounters to keep player-characters busy as they wander the world in search of adventure. Once you've designed an encounter or adventure you can either save it to disk/tape or send it the printer – essential unless you plan to keep your CPC with you when you're playing AD&D.

It's not a game, but is used with the rule books (*Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide* etc.). Experienced DM's may find the item of limited use, but novices will undoubtedly be glad of some help. It's due for release in March, though the price is as yet undecided.

Now perhaps we'll get *Pool of Radiance?*

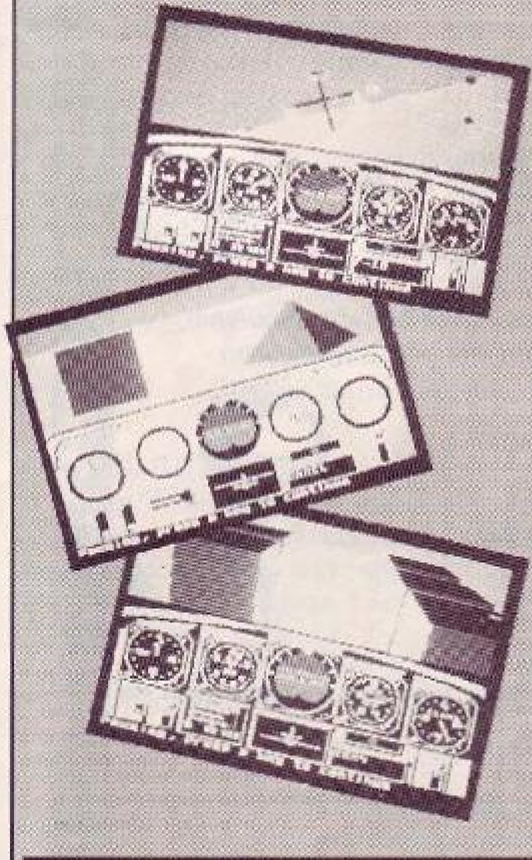


● The Dungeon Master gets a new assistant

Werewolves, Chuck Yeager, Lancelot and a giant alien monastery...

What goes up...

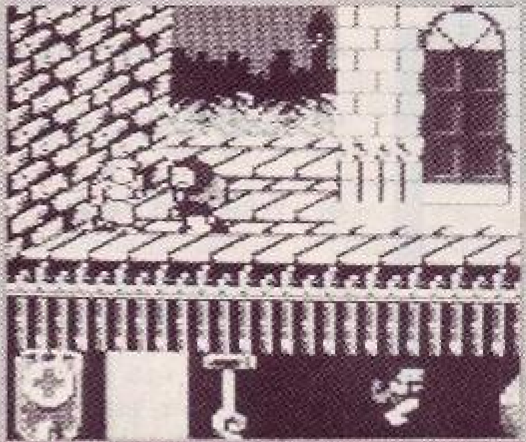
Electronic Arts are currently putting the finishing touches to *Chuck Yeager's Advanced Flight Trainer*. The game features 14 different aircraft ranging from the good old Spitfire through to modern jets. There are two versions of the game: one for 64K machines and the other for 128K. The 128K version has a demo and training mode. The control panel is always visible in 64K versions, even you happen to be looking out of the rear of the plane at the time, which seems a little odd. The extra memory gets around this problem on 128K machines. Expect the definitive CPC review right here next month...



▲ Chuck Yeager, CPC-style. Coming soon!

Back trouble

Level 9 have now got some cluesheets prepared for their two most recent games, *Lancelot* and *Ingrid's Back*. If you have one of the games and are stuck just send off the coupon supplied with the game to Level 9 and they'll send you a clue sheet free of charge. Level 9, 5 Mendip Road, Crown Wood, Bracknell, Berkshire RG12 3XG.



▲ *Werewolves of London*. Bark, bark.

Coining it

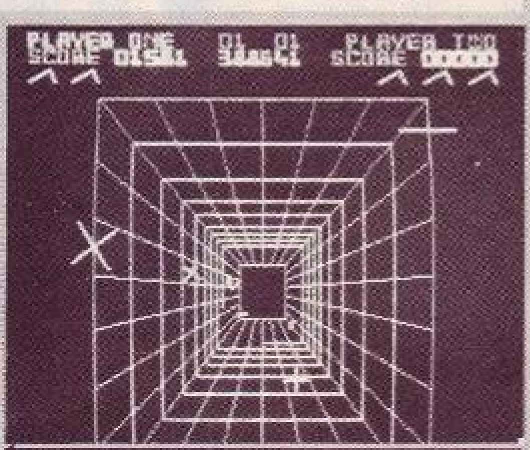
Summit Software, Alternative Software's £2.99 budget label, are re-launching *Mini Office* (*not* Mini Office II) which was well received when launched back in the mists of time. It consists of a word processor, database, spreadsheet and graphics utility for the spreadsheet.

Vroom at the top

International Speedway (£1.99, tape) by Silverbird is a motorcycle racing game in which you work your way up from street racing through local leagues and onwards and upwards until you finally reach the World Championship.



● *Heavy on the Magick* bounces back



● The return of coin-op conversion *Tempest*

We're wolves

Werewolves of London was originally released by the now defunct Ariolasoft and received a goodish review (*AA* 27, 66%). Now you can sink your teeth into the game for a mere £1.99 from Virgin/Mastertronic.

● Also making a second appearance on budget is *Tempest* (*AA* 14, 83%), that classic shoot-em-up which kept Bob Wade (RIP) happy for many long hours when it was released (he was so impressed he bought the arcade machine!).

● And making a very welcome return is the ex-Gargoyle game *Heavy on the Magick*, which stars Axil the Able in his adventures in Collodon's Pile (how Collodon feels about Axil adventuring in his pile has never been fully investigated). This too is an excellent game that's well worth the £1.99 asking price. *Tempest* and *Heavy on the Magick* are both available from Virgin/Mastertronic.

Giant alien *monastery?*

Dark Fusion is a full price scrolling shoot-em-up from Gremlin in which you are involved in alien slaughter. Teleporters are littered about the land that, according to the press release, 'take you and your ship onto a battle with a giant alien monastery'. Now either they mean monster, in which case *Dark Fusion* is hardly up for an innovation award; or they *do* mean monastery, in which case this could well be cult game of the year.

REACTION

Letters topical, controversial, cynical...

Two tribes

Violence in computer games actually exists in two different forms: the type which could actually be carried out, and the type which could never be replicated in any way.

Look at games like *Target Renegade* which make punching, kicking and killing people on the streets 'fun', when of course this kind of thing is far from amusing.

Operation Wolf may appear worse than this, but I don't think it has any dangerous influence because of its setting. How many kids are going to grow up in the middle of a jungle with POW camps? Not many! Whereas how many kids grow up in towns and cities where street violence is flourishing?

Other examples are *Savage* (killing aliens and bats), *Starglider* (smashing Egrons) and many other games of that ilk.

I really think that violent computer games which have any kind of setting which the player can relate towards can cause a profound influence on his or her mind.

David Carter
Woking, Surrey

A bit annoyed

In my last letter I made my attitude towards violence crystal clear. To that, you may add filthy and crude language. I am no saint goodness knows, and alas, possess my unfair share of vices. The employment of gutter etymology is not one of them.

When I saw your review on page 54 of issue 40 (I cannot even bring myself to mention the offending 'game', if that is what it is supposed to be) *(it was 'How to Be A Complete Bastard' – ed.)*, I became extremely angry.

Amstrad Action presumably grew up to reflect the adulthood of the bulk of its readers. Since the unlamented demise of *AMTIX!*, children have the limited choice of reading the 'official' periodical, or becoming *Amstrad Actioneers*. It follows, therefore, like it or not, you must bear a moral responsibility towards a sizeable minority of impressionable CPC-owning children. These unhappy days, with so much lack of proper parental and teacher care, they need all the help they can get to guide them towards the despised and old-fashioned virtues of decency, honesty, courtesy, consideration for others – and good manners, including the avoidance of such sickening foulness promoted in the aforementioned game.

I was beginning to form a good opinion of *Amstrad Action*. Now, to my dismay, this unhealthy trash is not only assumed to be 'great fun', you even attempt to give it some sort of additional respectability by concocting a competition. To compound your open invitation to children to compete for the game, you add hypocrisy with a so-called 'Important Warning' that clearly shows your real feelings by the levity and insincerity of its approach.

Wm. A. C. C. Smith

To answer your points as you raise them:

1) 'Gutter etymology' is a phrase completely void of meaning in the context in which you use it. Don't try to impress our readers with long words, because it won't work.

2) 'Extremely angry': not, by any chance, one of your vices? Certainly it's one of the seven deadly sins, or it was when I went to school.

3) No, AA didn't grow up to 'reflect the adulthood of the bulk of its readers': it grew up to reflect the varied age-groups and attitudes of its readers. We don't go around telling people what they should or shouldn't do, and getting 'extremely angry' about it.

4) I don't accept a 'moral responsibility' for our readers. That would be patronising nonsense, and the great majority of them intensely dislike being patronised. So do I, come to think of it.

5) Oh come off it Mr Smith. If you can get so worked up about the use of the words 'bastard' and 'wee', what outrage remains for true obscenity, like murder, rape and war?

I can readily accept that you don't like to see rude words in print, or presumably hear them or use them either. The rest of us, I'm afraid, do our best to live in the real world, where illegitimacy and excretion are facts of life. You don't have to approve, but getting 'extremely angry' doesn't help very much one way or the other.

Letters, pray!

Whether it's our reviews, the games that get released these days, the price of disks or whatever, no doubt something in this issue of *Amstrad Action*, or something that happens to you this month, is going to a) get your goat; b) tickle your fancy; c) rub you up the wrong way, or even; d) all of the above.

But don't just keep it under your hat – let off steam! We care, and listen. Every single letter received is read, and we publish as many as we can. And one letter each month wins a software voucher for £15!

Get the writing paper out – or your printer – and write now to: *Reaction, Amstrad Action*, 4 Queen Street, Bath BA1 1EJ.

The last word

I have a 6128 and am interested in purchasing either *Wordstar* or *New Word II*, which I believe are similar programs. I have trained in the use of *Wordstar* at college and would like to know if the deluxe program is available for use on the Amstrad 6128.

By the way, a few years ago I had a Commodore 64 and used a game called *Hunchback* (the original one). Do you know of a supplier for this game on the 6128?

Karen Woolley
Morecambe

By the deluxe version we presume you mean the full Wordstar, *and the answer is no: which probably just as well, since it would occupy approximately 438 disks (only joking – but even the 'pocket' version (reviewed AA1) is hardly nippy. The same goes for* NewWord.

You could do worse than retrain on Protext, BrunWord *or* Tasword, *all of which are cheaper and considerably faster than the other monsters.*

Each of these packages is a truly first-class wp program that performs excellently. We use Protext, *for instance, here at the AA office on ROM and wouldn't dream of changing.*

Hunchback *was released by Amsoft, and was reviewed in the first issue of AA. It received a meagre 49% rating, suggesting that you may be underwhelmed by it, even assuming you can find a copy – unlikely, since Amsoft games went west a long time hence. A sequel was released by Ocean, funnily enough called* Hunchback II *(reviewed in that same mammoth roundup in AA1, a healthier 74%), and you may find a copy lying about.*

Violent outburst

When I scan the pages of *A A* one inescapable factor assails my senses, and deeply saddens me: the abnormally high proportion of games of violence. The principal character is a thug whose sole aim in life is to kill, kill, kill. This in itself is bad enough but many of them, instead of merely blasting others to Kingdom Come, have to resort to horrific deeds of bloodshed that would make evil members of the IRA seem like gentle, God fearing souls by comparison. These vicious creations are the so-called heroes and heroines of their plots.

Unhappily, we live in a world where morals have been turned upside-down. Those among us who remember the days when Britain had the reputation of being the most law-abiding country on Earth suffer agonies of despair.

The situation is not helped by games of mindless brutality, like *Rambo*, *Barbarian*, *Target*, *Renegade*. A while back, the government bannded video nasties. These three, and others like them are, in my estimation, computer nasties, and should also be banned.

One might have thought that at least racing games would be safe, but no. *Road Blasters* and *Overlander* have to have their share of machine guns, mine fields, and other death-dealing paraphernalia. Is the animal world free from this disease of the mind? *Psycho Pigs UXB*, the sole aim of which is to bomb porkers into oblivion for no good reason, proves it is not.

First class commercial artists like Oliver Frey denigrate their obvious skills by producing colour illustrations in the most nauseating detail, leaving nothing to the imagination. They, the programmers, and the companies responsible for the obnoxious creations are little better than the purveyors of pornography, debasing their talents for worship at the feet of the God of Wealth. They seem to care little that most of their customers are children. Perhaps they are too close to their own childhood to realise the harm and corruption to which they are contributing.

Reviewers will hotly disagree with me, but they are as guilty as the others when awarding top ratings to such games. If I were a reviewer (and it is just as well I am not) I would be very harsh indeed. Zero rating would be automatic, regardless of other factors, and would extend to war games, both science fiction and historic; boxing, and the martial arts. You will doubtless have gathered by now that I am anti-violence in any shape or form – and you would be absolutely correct. I make no apologies for my intransigence.

There are hundreds of non-violent board games on the market, many of which would transfer well, so, how about it, US Gold, Mastertronic, and all you others?

Wm. A. C. C. Smith *(again)*

Steve Carey replies:

May I congratulate you for having produced a rotten argument to support your case. I was opposed to gratuitous violence in computer games. Now I intend becoming a supporter of it, just so I can distance myself from your views. Where to begin, though? Should I start by pointing out that anyone who is incapable, as you you seem to be, of distinguishing between fantasy fiction and bloody reality – that comparison of video games with the IRA makes me feel sick – is not in a position to judge what other people should be 'allowed' to see and not? Or perhaps I should challenge that guff about Britain once having the reputation as 'the most law-abiding nation on earth'? When was that, exactly?

But I think I'll just suggest that anyone who imagines that the violence of Psycho Pigs *is a serious threat to developing minds, a) doesn't know the game, and b) has a much lower opinion of young people's critical faculties than they deserve. It might be – no, it is – a load of old rubbish, but it's hardly dangerous.*

And if any game instantly merits a zero rating and a banning on the grounds of violence, on what possible grounds would any of the following be valued or permitted:

a) Shakespeare (King Lear, Cymbeline, Macbeth...);
b) All Quiet on the Western Front;
c) The Bible?

No, Mr Smith, it won't do. Your reactionary ranting just won't convince anyone. Its appeal will only be to those who already agree with you. There's a case to be made against violence in computer games: unfortunately, you've failed to make it.

● What do you think? Write to:
Violence is Golden, AA,
4 Queen St, Bath BA1 1EJ

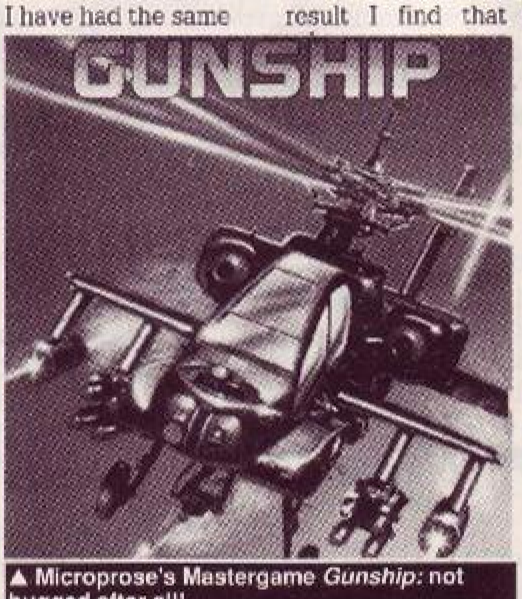


"YOUR COMPUTER GAMES ARE GETTING TOO REALISTIC..."

Gunship 'is not bugged'!

With regard to the letter from Anthony Perkins (*A A* 39) regarding a bug in *Gunship*, I have had the same problem. In fact when the alleged bug appeared, having reached the rank of Colonel and 20-29,000 points, I assumed that the game was over and started again from the beginning. However, I have come to the conclusion that it is not a bug at all.

The instruction manual states that reporting sick to avoid a particularly dangerous mission means that the mission is aborted, a reprimand is attached to your record and that promotion is more difficult to achieve. I have six reprimands on my record simply by reporting sick when a mission brief shows a wind velocity higher than seven knots. (Very hard to land properly in a gale.) As a result I find that promotion has not, so far, appeared. I have almost 60,000 points and so many medals that I am giving them away (no congressional Medal of Honour yet though).



▲ Microprose's Mastergame *Gunship*: not bugged after all!

I've found three smaller bugs that, although irritating, do not really detract from the game. Crashing at 90 feet without a hill in sight; the occasional target that can't be fired at; and a phantom enemy helicopter at the left side of the map.

Bill Jenkins
Cramlington,
Northumberland

Queried sanity

Last night I heard a phone-in radio program on LBC on the number of VDU operators who (having already become pregnant) had miscarriages, which were rightly or wrongly being blamed on the rays emitted by VDU's. These sort of statements make you query your sanity. I have noticed that a TV set emits fairly strong rays if you put your hand or face near the screen.

But I have also noticed that my 464 does not emit any rays. In fact, it collects all the particles of dust in the air and tobacco film, and this stuff sticks to my screen like glue and I have been accused of smoking too much and of having a filthy and dusty office.

This brings up the subject of whether the Amstrad is the only computer that does not emit these deathly rays which can apparently cause miscarriages.

T C Hockney
Basingstoke

Attack of the Gremlins

I'm afraid Gremlin's interpretation of the Bismark sinking in *Night Raider* is fanciful to say the least. Winston Churchill's *Second World War* Vol III devotes 14 pages to this incident from which it is clear that the ship sustained severe steering damage from Swordfish torpedo attacks and was subsequently sunk by RN warships.

As Kim said last month, this action took place in May 1941. In *An Encyclopaedia of Air Warfare* it is stated that the Grumman Avenger had just entered service in time for the battle of Midway, which all wargamers know took place in early June 1942 – i.e. over a year after this aircraft was supposed to have sunk the Bismark!

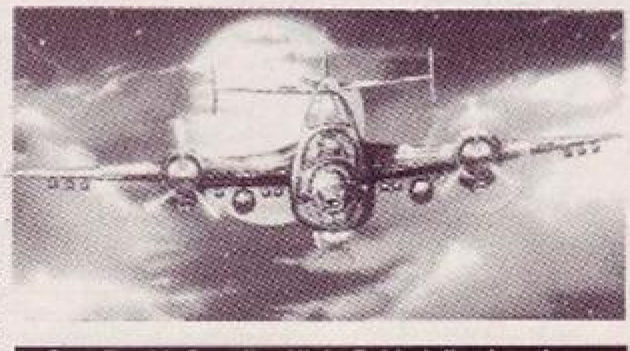
Of more interest to players of *Night Raider* with Multiface IIs is that poking &98AA, Ø and &8D33, Ø gives invulnerability to both Blackhawk and Ark Royal.

Fred Ball
Blackpool

● Kim Wells was right (*AA*40) and you were wrong: no Grumman Avengers saw action against the Bismarck. The first strike was, as you say, made by nine aircraft of 825 Squadron from HMS Victorious at about midnight on the night of 24th May 1941. This strike force was under the command of Lieutenant Commander Eugene Esmonde who was later awarded a posthumous Victoria Cross for his attack on the Scharnhorst and Gneisenau.

Following this, at about 3am on the 25th, contact with Bismarck was lost and not regained until she was spotted by Pilot officer D A Briggs, RAF, flying Catalina of Coastal command, at 10.30 on the following morning and almost immediately after that by two Swordfish of 810 Squadron piloted by Sub-Lieutenant (A) J Hartley and Lieutenant (A) J R Callander. These two swordfish continued to shadow Bismarck until relieved by two more Swordfish fitted with long-range tanks.

The final attack which disabled the Bismarck and enabled the fleet to make contact was made by four Swordfish from 810 Squadron under the command of Lieutenant Commander T P Coode, Commanding Officer of 818 Squadron and launched from HMS 'Ark Royal'.



▲ Gremlins hit Gremlin: *Night Raider's* 'back to the future' plays fast and loose with history

During the action, Sub-Lieutenant (A) F A Swanton's Swordfish was hit no less than 175 times but managed to get back to the 'Ark'.

I can vouch for the accuracy of all the foregoing since I was there, in 'Ark Royal' throughout the proceedings. The Grumman Avenger, TBF-1, did not come into service until nearly a year after the Bismarck action.

R J Skinner
Dursley, Gloucs

Red faces all round! Gremlin Product Manager Kevin Bulmer said: 'Oh dear. Actually it's all the fault of the original programmers, Acme Animations, who were Canadian (probably still are), and whose interest in historical veracity was minimal. It seems the true story didn't make for a very interesting simulation – so they shuffled the facts, as your very knowledgeable readers noticed! We were presented with a finished game, which we converted for the Amstrad in this country. Naturally Gremlin had no intention of offending anyone who may have been involved in these historical events'. And red faces from us, too, for stupidly believing what we read in the Gremlin manual! Still, thanks to all those who pointed out the error.

And we did **try** *to cover ourselves by saying that we weren't WWII experts!*

One of them

I have just finished a run of 66 games playing *Matchday II*. This includes two league programs and 11 cup runs. During this time I have remained unbeaten and during the two league sessions I conceded just one goal overall and won every match. In one match I won 7-0. Do any other readers –

Chris Kinsella
Wigan

Sorry Chris that's all we've got room for.

Sugarman



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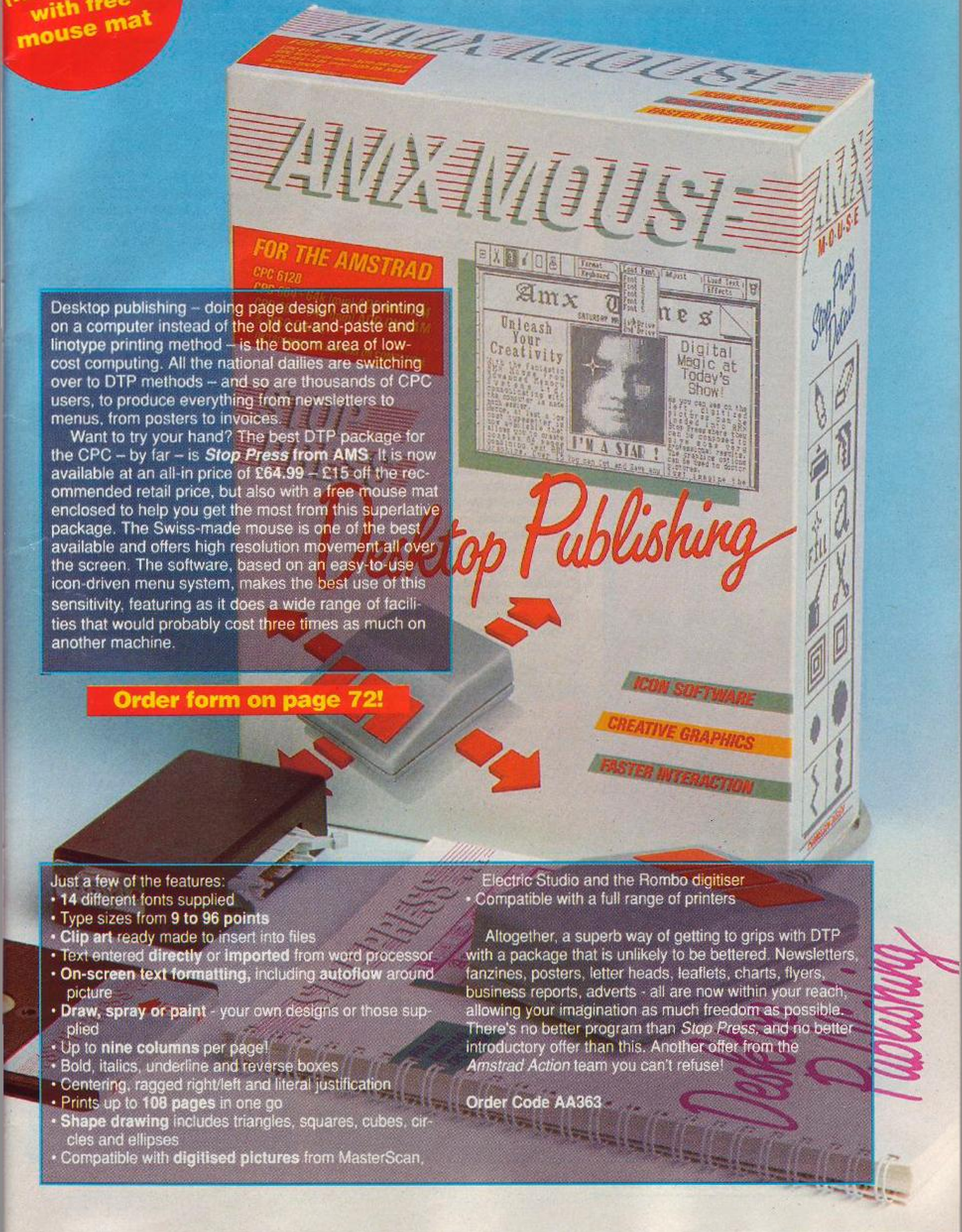
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Desktop publishing – doing page design and printing on a computer instead of the old cut-and-paste and linotype printing method – is the boom area of low-cost computing. All the national dailies are switching over to DTP methods – and so are thousands of CPC users, to produce everything from newsletters to menus, from posters to invoices.

Want to try your hand? The best DTP package for the CPC – by far – is ***Stop Press* from AMS**. It is now available at an all-in price of **£64.99** – £15 off the recommended retail price, but also with a free mouse mat enclosed to help you get the most from this superlative package. The Swiss-made mouse is one of the best available and offers high resolution movement all over the screen. The software, based on an easy-to-use icon-driven menu system, makes the best use of this sensitivity, featuring as it does a wide range of facilities that would probably cost three times as much on another machine.

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DRIVES – A HARD BARGAIN

Here at *AA* we generally clean the postbags to the dregs at Christmas, ready for a fresh winter assault of mail. Looking through all those *Hot Tips* and *Attic* letters, PAT McDONALD noticed all the requests for information on second drives. Dozens upon dozens of the things! Well, here he goes.

KDS 5.25"

£159.95
e.g. KDS ☎ 04853 2076

The 5.25" drive means that you can get very cheap blank disks – as a rough guide, 60p each is easily attainable, though you can always pay more... They come with their own dust sleeve, but it's easy to touch the exposed magnetic surface accidentally.

Using the drive alone is alright, but add some extra software and you've really got something. *Ramdos*, also manufactured by KDS, is the obvious choice, and when you're using it one thing becomes apparant: the disk speed is about half that of using a standard 3" drive. The enhanced capacity (as much as 796K under CPM+) more than makes up for it. It is quite something to see it format a disk and initialize all that free space.



▲ The 5.25" from KDS: 60p disks!

It's impressive, cased in metal, and takes up a fair old slice of desk room. If you really want a large capacity drive, then take a good look at this one.

The CPC disk drive was generally invented very much as a CPM-based system, and CPM can handle lots and lots of disk drives – up to 16, indeed. It's a pity that, on the Amstrad, only two drives can be used (actually, a silicon disk can be added as well, but that's another story altogether).

What's the big idea?

A basic CPC with disk has 178K to play with. Add another 3" drive (like the Amstrad FD-1) and you double that. The problem is that very large applications (like CPM utilities, *At Last Plus, NewWord*) gobble up most of your first drive's capacity for their programs, leaving you with precious little room for data. The Amstrad FD-1 second drive costs £99, assuming you can find a supplier.

There is a thriving market for third party or independently produced second drives. Apart from the FD-1, there have also been some traders who offered 3" drives – Matmos springs to mind. Or Silicon Systems. These are usually quite cheap – around £80 minimum – and match the machine well in terms of looks.

If you want more than 178K, then going for a different sized drive is a good option. (The quad density 3" is prohibitively expensive.) There are two varieties, the 3.5" (rapidly becoming the standard for floppy disks) and the older 5.25" drives, for which the disks are cheaper.

Harmed and dangerous

5.25" disks are, however, more easily damaged than 3.5", which are in turn less durable than 3". Costs go in a similar fashion, although 3" disks are *outrageously* expensive to the public. (Avoid cheap disks with the circular indentations: 'C&Ts' – Cheap 'n Tackies – are used as frisbies in the *AA* office. They're that bad.)

A second 3" drive can soon be filled by some of the more powerful applications, which leaves you with either using multiple disks – a real drag in CPM+, and even worse in CPM – or move up to another league in storage.

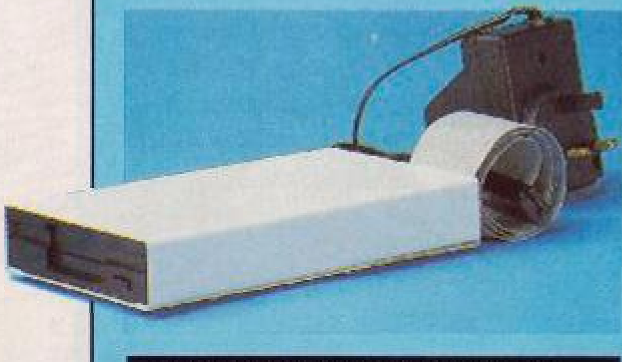
Under Amsdos, the situation can get really silly. With a 128K machine, you can have a lot of data in store, plus a huge program. And remember, every time you save an update with the same name, a backup file is created automatically: so your disk can fill within an hour's use.

Must be crackers

A further example of a need for a second drive is in program development. When people are writing computer programs, the amount of storage that is desirable becomes huge. A program like *Pyradev* can input hundreds of K of source code, and produce one

MEGADRIVE

£124.95 with Ramdos; £134.95 with Romdos or Rodos
Siren ☎ 061 228 1831



▲ The Siren 'Megadrive', and very pretty too

Similar to the KDS offering. The capacity is the same, and as far as the software goes (any of the three reviewed can be purchased) there's little difference either. It does take up much less space, and those disks are harder to damage.

I'm not saying they're more reliable: with disks, you get what you pay for. So, an expensive 5.25" disk should at least in theory be better than a cheap 3.5". Do remember though, that 3.5" is becoming more and more popular every day.

DRIVE SWITCHER

Price not yet decided
Strathclyde Developments ☎ 0292 541283

An ingenious little device this. All it does (after it's been fitted to the inside of a 664/6128 – sorry, no 464 version yet) is switch drive A around with drive B. This might not seem too good, and if you have two 3" drives it isn't particularly amazing. If you have a large capacity second drive, though, it's excellent news. It means you can copy disk based programs across to the larger format (*Stop Press*, for instance) and run them on the second drive. (Or perhaps I mean the first drive, which was the second drive... Well, I know what I mean.)



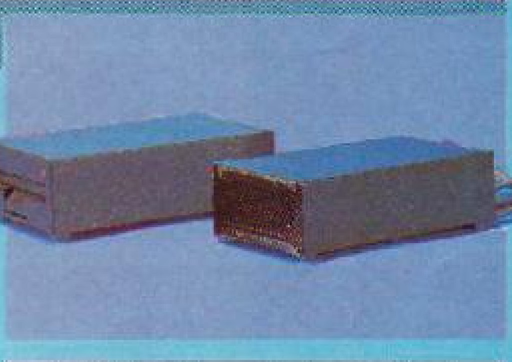
▲ A drive switcher in the flesh (?)

THIRD PARTY 3" DRIVE

£80-100
Supplies scarce

The supply of 3" drives manufactured by independent producers has dwindled considerably, and if there *is* a company still out there producing them, please let us know! If you can find a disk drive like these for sale, especially if it's offered at a reasonable price, then buy one. They're reliable and robust, and stand many years of hard use.

These drives generally come with a separate power supply, although I have known them to sell without a power supply or case at around £35. That's OK for a *Soldering On* fanatic, but less than ideal for the average user.



▲ A 3" drive: if you find one, tell us!

file from it: doing this on a single built-in drive is just out of the question.

Rather more distasteful are the backup merchants, the people who collect cracked (deprotected) versions of games and save them onto disk. Large capacity second drives are good, because dozens of games can be saved onto them. 3" are often ignored entirely: they just can't handle the amounts of data. Mind you, they save disk swapping when pirating disks. Now, who would do a thing like that?

So it's clear that there's a genuine need for the devices: but just what can you get for your hard earned? We've tried out all the drives you see covered here, and as usual left you to make up your own mind... ●

Drive safely

Here's a few tips on getting a drive to behave:–

- The drive should follow the Shugart standard.
- No terminating resistor should be connected if you are using it as drive B.
- The drive must have a 'Ready' signal on pin 34, as well as its own power supply.
- The cable to connect them should be the correct connectors on both ends (this is different for the 464).
- Finally, a decent program for extra drives should be obtained (see below).
- Now plug it in and see if it works. Unless the drive isn't a Shugart type, it won't hurt your computer.

RAMDOS

£24.95 disk
Rom version (Romdos): £29.95
KDS ☎ 04853 2076

Quite possibly the dullest of articles – which isn't to say it's not worth every penny. The whole point of the program is that it resets the disk prarameters according to what you want, and then vanishes away. On the good side, it works well with CPM and CPM+, enabling those databases and spreadsheets access to a much larger storage area.

In many ways, *Ramdos* is a good choice for the the average user. Apart from starting the program, there's really not that much to do. In itself though, this may represent something of a chore. So, KDS have produced a ROM version. Setting up with a second drive has never been easier.

Its power combined with ease of use make it worthwhile. But it isn't the most powerful program available: that accolade belongs elsewhere...



▲ Ramdos: not very exciting, really

RODOS

£29.95 ROM only
Romantic Robot ☎ 01 200 8870

In contrast to *Ramdos*, *Rodos* creates a new operating system rather than by simply patching the existing one (Amsdos). The result is very sophisticated. It can be set up using an inbuilt boot option: so customizing it to automatically configure to a particular system is no great programming chore. The number of commands and enhancements available is amazing – it allows the use of parent/child directories, so you can store collections of files together in a logical way.

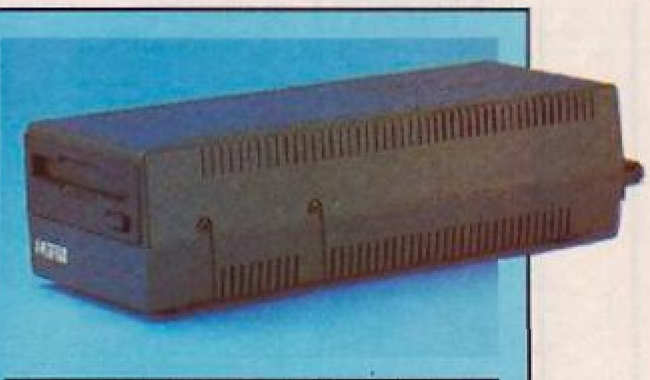
Rodos also configures the 3" first drive into a 200K usable format straight away, again with a parent/child directories. It also continues to recognise standard disk formats. So transferring programs onto the new format is easy. There's even a collection of enhancer programs, called *Rodos Extra* (£14.95 see *AA33*).

Sounds good? Indeed it is: if you're prepared to put in the effot, *Rodos* really is incredibly useful. The only thing for which it's no use at all is CPM: just don't mix the two up, or you'll get double trouble.

AMSTRAD FD-1

£99.95
e.g. MJC Supplies ☎ 0462 32897

If you have a CPC464 with a DDI-1 interface you'll know this at once. It matches the first drive exactly. 664/6128 owners, however, tend to look down on this disk drive, as it is considerably bulkier than the internal drive on their machines. They also need a different lead to connect it up.



▲ Amstrad FD-1: the obvious choice

Second drive myths – exploded!

BANG! – 464 owners often phone to ask if they can connect a second drive without having a DDI-1 first drive. The answer is no. The DDI-1 includes the disk operating system ROM as well as the hardware to get the disks to talk to the computer: so don't get a second drive without getting a first.

CRACK! – I don't need another wall socket, do I? Yes you do. A second disk drive – *any* second drive – needs another power point. It breaks the CPC maxim of 'everything on one plug', but saves on the cost of installing a better power supply in the monitors and modulators.

KABOOM! – Do I need more software? Depends. A second drive on its own will behave just like a normal Amstrad 3" 178K beastie.

If the drive can store more data, a program such as *Rodos* or *Ramdos* can patch the operating system to allow more storage space to be used.

HOT TIPS

£20 anyone?

We welcome contributions to *Hot Tips*, and the best published each month earn their author £20. So what are you waiting for? Address your work to: *Hot Tips, AA*, 4 Queen St, Bath, Avon, BA1 1EJ

PAT McDONALD passes on more of your hints

Just the ticket

Isotopes – the fantastic game on the B side of the cover tape on *AA40*. Just the ticket to keep you in joystick cramp for hours on end. One problem though: it doesn't work with a joystick! So for those who haven't a clue how to convert it, here goes.

Break into the program by typing **ESC** twice. Now enter these lines into it:

```
330 IF INKEY(72)=0 THEN d%=1
340 IF INKEY(73)=0 THEN d%=2
350 IF INKEY(74)=0 THEN d%=3
360 IF INKEY(75)=0 THEN d%=4
```

Don't forget to **SAVE "ISOTOPES"** afterwards!

Joel Hogarth, Walsall

Head solution

Recently my 464 stopped loading all but the simplest games. I sent it to be repaired, and three weeks later (after being charged £10) it came back with the message 'Tape Deck unrepairable'. I have a disk drive, so the machine wasn't a total loss, but I wasn't very happy about the situation.

At the recent G-Mex show I consulted Amstrad's technical person (there was only one). He suggested that the tape head had probably gone. I could have had it replaced locally, but I decided to have a go at repairing it myself. With amazing success!

For any readers who also have problems using their tape software:

1) Obtain a standard mono tape head (I got mine from Maplin Electronics ☎0702 554155. The order number is FQ64U, and it costs £3.50 plus P&P).
2) Remove the six screws in the CPC's base and open it up.
3) The keyboard side is connected to the base by two groups of wires. The connector nearest the tape deck should be gently pulled away.
4) The tape mechanism can now be removed by unscrewing the four red screws holding it in place. (Eject the lid to help it out.)
5) Another pair of hands are useful to hold the mechanism whilst you work on it.
6) The head should now be seen (it looks just like the replacement). Some of the later heads are larger than the original, but they all work.
7) Unsolder the connecting wires and unscrew the old head. Don't mix it up with the new one.
8) Place the new head in and screw it in place, then solder the wires back onto it.
9) Assemble the machine.

The new head will need aligning. You can either get the tape aligning kit from Interceptor or follow these steps. Find a thin long screwdriver and a long playing tape. Place the tape into the cassette recorder and press play. Turn the volume to about half way (it's very unlikely that you'll hear much at first). Now put the screwdriver into the hole on the front of the cassette unit, and adjust it by small amounts. When the music sounds the loudest, that's the best place. Try loading a game – it should work first time.

Matthew Pinder, Preston

Useful addresses

Some useful addresses for the 464:
&B819: File type of last block loaded.
&B1C8: Current screen mode.
&B294: Lowest definable SYMBOL (default 240)
&B1D9/&B1EA: Border colours.
&B4EA/&B4E9: SPEED KEY (&B4EA),(&B4E9)
&B285/6: Cursor X and Y position.
&B32C/E: Graphics cursor X and Y position.

● Have you ever noticed how every *Type-In* to let you use double height characters uses a SYMBOL AFTER command? By sticking to the default characters, memory can be saved – but this means using the slow ROM routine TXT SET MATRIX or directly accessing the ROM.

On the 464, data for the 256 characters starts at &3800 with the 8 bytes for CHR$(0) followed at &3808 with CHR$(1) data and so on, but remember – this is in the lower ROM, not the RAM.

So, how do you access the correct data? I use the routine below.

```
LD A,ascii code
LD L,A
LD H,&7
ADD HL,HL
ADD HL,HL
ADD HL,HL
```

After the routine, turn the lower ROM on, and voila! HL holds the address of the correct data.

● While I'm on machine code, a lot of programmers would like to use the 5K of RAM that Amsdos takes up (from &AC00 onwards). The only trouble is that this would overwrite the jumpblock, making it more difficult than ever to access the ROM routines for those useful tasks like reading the keyboard, producing sound etc. There is a way:–

1) Don't erase &B982-&B9B0.
2) Find the ROM address of all the routines you want to use.
3) Somewhere in RAM, put CALL &B982 before your addresses.

Example: TXT OUTPUT (&BB5A), ROM address &9400. So in RAM, put this routine:

```
print:  CALL &B982
        DB &0,&94
```

You can use as many ROM routines as you can fit in memory but remember to put CALL &B982 before each ROM address. Oh, and &B982 POPs an address, so in the example above the &0 and &94 are not executed.

● One last point – remember you are creating a jumpblock so don't incorporate the CALL &B982 into a routine. Below is an example to print a string.

```
        LD HL,string
        LD B,14
pl:     LD A,(HL)
        CALL print
        INC HL
        DJNZ pl
        RET
print:  CALL &B892
        DB &0,&94
string: DS "Amstrad Action"
```

All these have been tested on a 464, so 6128 owners should not depend on them working. If anyone wants to exchange tips and ideas, then please get in touch.

Michael Gledhill, 21 Newtake Rd, Tavistock, Devon, PL19 9BX

Very good indeed Michael. £20 will arrive shortly.

ARMY STORES

Nearly everyone at some time or another gets a strong urge to use the CPC for something useful, such as storing lists of information. After all, you're not exploiting its full potential if you treat it simply and solely as a games machine. The trouble is that there's an imposing amount of jargon to plough through. The route to enlightenment isn't particularly well signposted, either: it's fine to be told 'get a database', but in itself this isn't terribly helpful advice. It would be a bit much to claim to offer in two pages a complete guide to using databases on the CPC, but if at the end of it you're a little wiser then PAT McDONALD'S effort will not have been in vain.

Extract from a letter recently received:

"I am an electronics technician and would like to use my CPC464 to store the following information on cassette:

i) Type of equipment (One of four types)

ii) Fault on equipment

iii) Cure for fault

So an example might read something like:–

Type	*Fault*	*Cure*
Towed	*EHT Trips out*	*PSA*

I would like to be able to hold several pages like this and be able to start a new page, add the info required and be able to refer to previous pages."

– L/Cpl S Vickers, RSA Larkhill

Computers are regarded by non-users as mysterious sources of knowledge: just recall those dreadful novels, films and TV series where the obscure clue is discovered by someone frowning at a monitor, pressing a few keys and exclaiming, 'Hang on, I think we might have something here!' What is not appreciated is that the storing of information on a computer is in itself no use to anyone. Add the processing power, though, the ability to look up and cross reference facts and figures, and you *have* 'got something here'.

Generally speaking computer databases are complete stores of records for one particular subject. So a full club membership list would comprise one database. It might be stored in lots of different files: perhaps it would be split alphabetically. But it's only one database. One database could be comprised of a series of files (CATalogue a disk or tape: a list of the files on it will be displayed). In each file, there would be various records (defined here as individual complete entities: perhaps a member of a club, or a piece of faulty equipment in the case of **L/Cpl Vickers**.)

On each record would be a series of fields (an area which can store one piece of data for a record). So, the name field of a club database would have a member's name in it: the address would have the address etc. In **L/Cpl Vickers'** case, there are three fields: type of equipment, fault and cure.

There wouldn't necessarily be just the three fields per record, however: he wanted to store several different types on one page (one record). This would be easy enough, by having say 15 fields, so making 5 subjects per record. No hassle.

Record collection

There are five activities associated with databases:

Data Setup: deciding on the structure of a database is an important task. How many records? How many fields? A field that isn't used much should be eliminated, in order to make more room for more. On the other hand, including a field you missed to begin with can be a tricky job on some database programs, more so if you have started entering data.

Data Entry: to have a database, of course, some poor soul has to sit down and enter it all. Once completed, few people find the need (or indeed the inclination) to enter the information all over again.

Calculating sort

High tech uses are more specialised. 'Knowledge bases' are allied to databases, except that they contain conditions and results for situations. From these, programs called expert systems make calculated guesses at predicting results for real occurrences. In simple terms, computers that can tell you if your plane is about to crash (so you know for sure you're going to die), or can recommend a heart/lung transplant for a sick patient. The impressive thing is, they'd usually be right.

Data Search: this is the general, everyday usage. Some database programs allow you to specify a few general characteristics to search for. A technique used by many junk mail senders, I suspect. Anyway, sorting records by contents is an important job, and is included on most products.

Data Print: a task not only used for printing out target records – sometimes it becomes necessary to divide an over-large database into several smaller databases.

Data Update: any database is only as useful the accuracy of its data, so regularly checking and correcting errors is a vital part of using any database. This is almost as tedious as **Entry**.

They're the bland jobs, and to be perfectly honest they're not much fun. The purposes you can use a database for are much more interesting. At the home user side, there's making lists of collections: stamps, coins, music recordings, and so on. Business users find them useful for customer lists, stock control and product statistics. Individuals of all types find databases very useful: in a way, the programs are silicon paper, able to store information for studying later.

Programming

Databases are huge arrays of connected data. The searching criteria are generally not complex: 'find all records that begin with S', or 'Remove all males over 55'. Occasionally some searches are requested that are more complex.

When one particular field is used often for searches, it makes sense to have that field first in a record.

The reason for this is that the computer has to search each record for the field to be checked, and it makes for quicker searches for it to find it first rather than last. In this, databases are one of the few occasions when what the end user does affects the performance of a program.

DATABASES ON THE CPC

Once upon a time there were lots and lots of Amstrad databases. Three have stood the test of time: *Masterfile III* from Campbell Systems, *Random Access Database* by Minerva Systems, and *At Last Plus* published by Rational Solutions.

There's also a database included with *Mini Office II*. And to those still unsure about how useful a database program can be but would like to find out, we have included just such a program in this month's *Type-Ins*.

EASIBASE

When the program first runs, it requests the total number of fields you require. The maximum capacity the program can handle is 15 fields of 30 characters, each with a name of not more than 15 characters, to make a total not more than 201 records (0-200).

In other words, no more than 201 items can be stored, each having up to 15 characteristics. The capacity of these can be up to 30 letters or numbers long, and each can have a title ('name', 'age' etc) of no more than 15 letters or numbers.

Let's use the example that L/Cpl Vickers



▲ This is what's required

requested 700 words ago. The first thing to do is to set the number of fields to 15. Why 15? Well, that way we're using up all of the available space: we'll subdivide those into lots of five, with the three fields each that are needed. Once that's been acheived, the names of all the fields must be entered. After that, it's over to you to actually put in the information required, L/Cpl Vickers.

ATLAST PLUS

£39.95 CPM+ only
Rational Solutions ☎ 056681 511

This is a database that uses the disk drive, and so the capacity is very large (particularly if you have a second drive attached). Indeed it can cope with up to 32,000 records, which would fill a hard disk drive. There's also quite a good manual, which helps.

Some of the options are pretty advanced: fields can be further subdivided into elements, for instance, which means that the amount of detail that can be held on an individual record is very good indeed.

Another of the more powerful features is the report generator, which can produce all sorts of statistics on databases. The only fly in the ointment is the lack of calculating features, but that still doesn't detract from the power of this program.

MINI OFFICE II

£14.95, £19.95 disk all CPCs
Database Software ☎ 0625 879940

As mentioned earlier there is indeed a database program within this compendium of business utilities (word-processor, accounts, spreadsheet and comms are the others). The database is pretty simplistic, but has the advantage of being relatively easy to learn. Setting up a database is simple indeed, and entering the data is only a bit tougher.



▲ *Mini Office II* – Database's moneyspinner

What the program lacks is some real storage ability: it can have up to 25 fields, and a couple of hundred records. It's not really enough for real memory munchers, but for the occasional one off *Mini Office II* is OK.

RANDOM ACCESS DATABASE

£39.95 disk only
Minerva Systems ☎ 0392 37756

'Random access' is the somewhat useful ability to step to a particular location without passing through the intervening space. Clever. Since databases are long lists of records, they're generally sorted by sequence, going from one to the other. This product lets you go straight to a given field, saving you lots of your valuable time.

The capacity is large – 3000 records on a 64K, 6000 on a 128K. Each record can have up to 40 fields, and a field can be up to 1500 characters long. Not all of them, of course: you'd run out of space pretty sharpish if you tried that!

The maths are excellent for a database, with not only +, –, / and * but also SIN, COS etc. There's also some pretty mean abilities with laying out a record.

MASTERFILE III

£34.95 cass ,128K disk only
Campbell Systems ☎ 0378 77762

The main feature of this product is the way records can be related. A record of one software house, for example, which produced several games in a collection could be a parent record: each game would be a child record, set to point towards the parent. This saves memory over the conventional approach of having to repeat some fields.

Designing the way in which records are presented to you is selected from a menu, which is a little clumsy. Some calculation on fields is possible, but it doesn't have the same capacity as, say, *Random Access Database*. You can reserve 'search templates', which are lists of words for the program to search for. Better than just one or two condition searches.

PROBLEM ATTIC

Quite openly offering people assistance is PAT McDONALD

Bard's Tale question

I think the *Bard's Tale* is the best game ever. One thing though, the manual says that the ? key will print the time of day, plus the location of the party. It doesn't work! Why? Can you or any readers do a program to get the feature to work? I have the disk version.

Ian Garnett, Oldham

There probably wasn't enough time/memory/inclination to include everything in the game, but as you say it's a cracker without this function. As for getting it working, well that depends really...

One possibility is that the time function isn't implemented too well within the game, in which case printing it would be difficult. I daresay it could be done: we'll just have to wait and see if we get a program that fits the bill.

Convert's prayer

I am in the midst of getting the bits and pieces together for the great 464-6128 conversion. If I also bought a copy of CPM+ would the CPM+ version of *Protext* work OK? If you also said that absolutely any 6128 program will work on a converted 464 then I would be ecstatic.

B S J Pandya, Wirral

Well, as far as we've been able to ascertain, the 464 with a 6128 ROM, disk drive and 64K extra RAM does seem to be a dead ringer for a true 6128. We test everything we get, and if it should come to pass that a program isn't compatible, we'll let you know. Fair? (If you, dear reader, know different, please get in touch!)

CAT among the printers

Is there a way I can CATalogue a disk or tape to my Citizen 120D printer?

A Thomas, Dorset

Just type in and use this listing. Be warned that for tapes you should press ESC *twice, and then type* GOTO 20*. Sorry about this, but the command* **CAT** *works differently for tape and disk.*

```
10 MODE 2:CAT
20 RESTORE 50
30 FOR z=&BF00 TO &BF06
40 READ b$:POKE z,VAL("&"+b$)
50 NEXT z
60 DATA cd,60,bb,32,07,bf,c9
70 PRINT #8
80 FOR x=1 TO 80
90 FOR y=1 TO 21
100 LOCATE x,y:CALL &BF00
110 a$=CHR$(PEEK(&BF07))
120 PRINT #8,a$;
130 NEXT y
140 PRINT #8
150 NEXT x
```

Compat-ability

I am thinking of purchasing the Amstrad DDI-1 disk drive for my CPC464. I would like to know if the *Multiface II* is compatible with my system for transferring games (all originals) from tape onto disk.

Also, can the CTM640 monitor (the one without the built-in 12 Volt socket) be used to power the DDI-1 disk drive – or does the drive have its own external power supply?

David Mayden, Stoke-on-Trent

The combination works very well, although very occasionally the connectors wobble and the machine crashes. This happens fairly frequently when you have multiple interfaces connected to a 464, and although it's annoying I can't really class it as 'incompatible'.

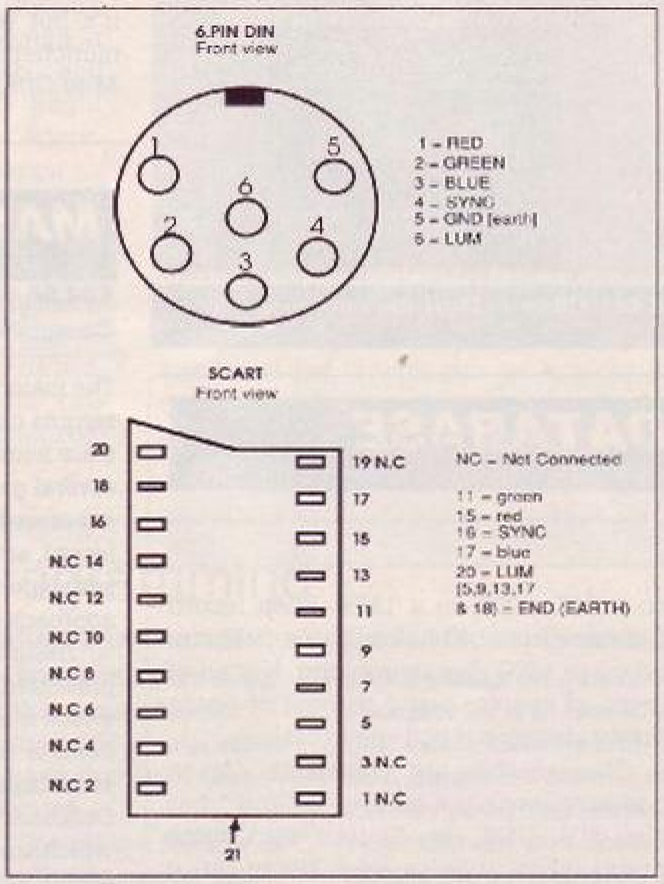
Both the FD-1 and the DDI-1 have their own power supplies, so there's no problem at all.

Don't drift off like that!

I have a 6128. When I connect it to the TV via the MP2 modulator and start to play games, it starts to drift off tune very quickly. The TV is a 22" Salora. It's only a year old and there are no other problems with stations or the video channel. Is the MP2 at fault? I would prefer to connect the computer to the TV from the RGB monitor socket to the Scart Eurosocket on the TV. Is there a ready made lead to do this on the CPC? If not, could you please tell me the pin connections etc.

Kevin McNally, Newry

The pin outs of the Scart and CPC connectors are as in the illustration. Using these, any electrical repair bod worth his socks should be able to make a cable for you. (And charge you for it.)



Gone west

Help! I purchased *Toadrunner*, and I'm having problems. I have written to Ariolasoft (who make the game) but they cannot help as the programmers left over a year ago. They suggested writing to you. I don't know if it's a bug in the program or what but I can't use any of the items lying around and therefore can't get past 1%. I am at my wits' end.

Mrs J Green, Livingston

Unfortunately Ariolasoft themselves have now long gone west. The game is a bit before our time here on AA. Has a reader got any tips they'd like to send in?

Totally eclipsed

Your Christmas free gift was fantastic. But could you please explain how the instructions for the programs have been written and hidden in the help file. I couldn't find any clues to the data when I LISTed the program.

S Ismail, Dundee

The secret is to have a copy of Protext *on ROM. Just type in the Basic program, and* |P. *Now put in your text file.* QUIT, *and adjust the* FOR-NEXT *loop to the correct length. When you* SAVE *the program, the text is saved with it.*

Spaced out man

Can you tell me please what word-processors are available for the CPC464. Also, my spacebar doesn't work on one side – any help on that one?

Nicholas Hughes, Portsmouth

The choices available are Protext *from Arnor (☎ 0733 68909) which costs £19.95 on tape, and* Tasword *from Tasman (☎ 0532 742928), priced the same.* Protext *is much faster but a little more difficult to learn.* Tasword *has lots of menus but the speed isn't up to much. You pays your money...*

The keyboard goes wrong often, because it's a moving part. Very likely it's a metal insert that's come out of place. However, if your machine is out of guarantee, I would urge you to use a repair specialist unless you are confident in your repair abilities. Having a keyboard gunged up because of over enthusiastic gluing is a nightmare.

If you feel fine about opening your machine up, do so. Separate the two halves by unplugging the two connectors. Now look at the keyboard half. Carefully undo the screws holding the keyboard plate in, and gently lift it up. (If you don't do this carefully, you'll now be covered in lots of coloured keys. Keep them all together – losing one is a major disaster.)

What you will probably find is that a small metal tag has come out of one end of the spacebar. Glue it back in, and leave the machine until it's dry. Then put the machine back together, and you shouldn't have any more trouble.

If you do need a repair company, try Analytical Engineering on (☎0702 618455). Bear in mind that keyboard replacement is very expensive, so try to convince them to repair it.

Bright and queasy

I recently purchased an Amstrad CPC464 computer with a colour monitor, but have found that the colours on the screen are too garish. Noting the absence of colour or contrast controls (as one would find on a television) I rang Amstrad to see if something could be added.

The representative was apologetic but advised that this was not the case. While I can probably arrange for the dealer to adjust the monitor to my particular taste (or obtain a refund) I would obviously like the flexibility of being able to adjust the set to suit the varying circumstances

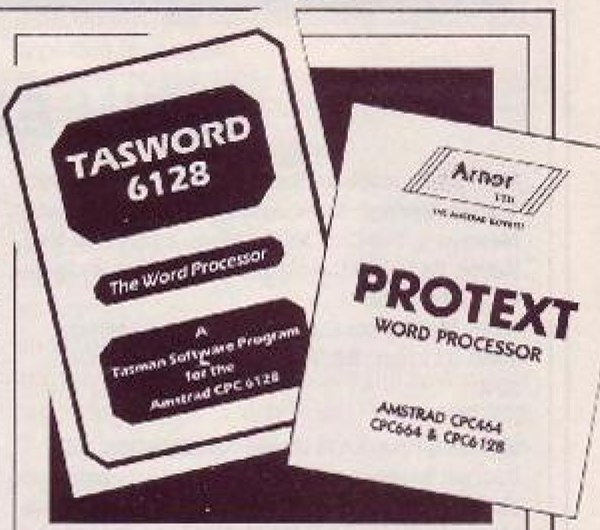
Is there anything to solve my problem? Would I be better advised using a colour TV instead of a monitor? If I do this, how about picture quality?

I Burdett, Horley

Yes, computer colours are *garish. Adjusting colour/contrast is a case of reaching inside the computer and twiddling a few knobs. It might be possible to persuade an electrical repair shop to install some more knobs on the surface that repeat these controls.*

Buying a TV monitor will give you the control you want, but you will notice the comparative lack of clarity and resolution.

One cheap and simple solution would be to buy a screen filter made out of transparent plastic that will tone down the colours. You lose some brightness, but it's worth it. ●



▲ *Protext* and *Tasword*: both have things to recommend them, and the final choice is yours

Background cover

I am currently learning assembler with the help of*Maxam* and a few books. I can't understand yet how to do sprites or three channel sound. Hopefully *The Look* will come up with the goods soon, but how about backgrounds? I never did understand how games could store so much information. And how can I set up a disk so that it's impossible to CAT? I have a 464.

David Gibbon

The background data for games is set up in a modular form. Let's take a jungle style background. All that games do is record where each tree is, and then have just one tree in memory. When a particular piece of background is put onto the screen, then the computer looks up where each tree has to go, and copies the same picture to that position.

To vary the backgrounds you could have more than one picture of a tree, but the saving in memory would not be so good. (That's why games with large playing areas tend to be rather boring to look at.)

There are innumerable ways to set up a disk as you want, the easiest being to stick all the directory entries into a different user area. So, set up a variable with a number from 0-15, and then change the user to that number. Any data saved will go to that area, so a casual CAT *will not reveal it.*

```
a=15:|USER,@a
SAVE "filename"
CAT        Make sure it's there!
a=0:|USER,@a
CAT        It's vanished.
```

Although the program will LOAD *Ok, to* CAT *it you would have to type in* a=15:|USER,@a *again.*

But what exactly *is* the problem?

I have a 6128 with colour monitor. When I plug the computer into the monitor, the screen goes on. It also constantly moves diagonally like an old TV. When I use my friend's computer this doesn't happen. Which part should I take to be mended?

T Horsman, Beckingham

Before you rush off to a repair shop, take a look at the back of the monitor. There are two knobs, one can be turned with your fingers, the other needs something like a screwdiver to turn. By twiddling these you might improve your picture.

Far more likely though is that the computer-monitor connecting lead has been damaged. Take the monitor to a TV repair shop – they should be able to sort out the problem if you explain it carefully. It's almost certainly not the computer.

Get 'em off!

Get your contributions off now to: *Problem Attic, AA,* 4 Queen St, Bath BA1 1EJ

AA helpline

NEW ENTRIES

Tips, pokes, maps for Rebelstar, Xcel, Magic Knight Trilogy, Equinox, Zoids, Antiriad, Sentinel, Aliens, Mercenary, Tau Ceti, MGT, Dragon's Lair, Icon Jon, Nether Earth, VB Cave Adventure, asking for help on Zombi, Driller
Steve McClay (no Steve, we haven't forgotten you!), 32 Lycett Rd, Wallasey, Merseyside, L44 2DA

Anyone got an *AA*18 they're willing to part with? Poor old Debbie can't get hold of one – it's out of print. (We did look in the office for one for you, Debbie: no luck.)
Debbie Bainbridge, 16 George St, Ystrad Mynach, Hengoed, Mid-Glamorgan CF8 7BJ

Renegade, FMI&II, Superstuntman & about 8 trillion others
Richard Ruane, 97 Cobden St, Darlington, Co Durham DL1 4JD ☎ 0325 58745

Hitchhikers, Tasword, some BASIC, Matchday II, Pagemaker
Ben Taylor, 5 Hope St, Old Glossop, Derbyshire SK13 9SB ☎ 04574 62023 between 4-6.30pm only

Penpals please! (Good luck with the A levels – Steve)
Paul Scott, 13 Kiln Crescent, Bishop Middleham, Co Durham DL17 9AP

Tips on Dizzy, Grand Prix Rally II, Superstuntman and loads more. Cheat Modes 25p & sae per order. 464 only.
K. Gillard, 80 Wentbridge Rd, Bolton, Gtr. Manchester BL1 2QR ☎ 0204 399198

The reach out collection: 10 good games: Art Studio, Ace Test, Reach Out & others. Send £1 & sae & disc
Rowan Griffin, 6 Charles Rd, Frome, Somerset, BA11 1NT ☎ 0373 63389

Hints/pokes Gauntlet, Gryzor, Ikari Warriors, Super Stuntman & others
Alex Henshall, 44 Badger Rd, Tytherington, Macclesfield, Cheshire SK10 2EP ☎ 0625 25690

Help on Basic programming, DMP 2000, short machine code routines (workarounds), soldering on articles, readers' ideas for type-ins &c
Rafe Aldridge,☎ 01 505 5600

Sheets of pokes for over 70 top games for use with Multiface. Send large SAE
Stephen Trimmer, 24 Vale Rd, Broadstairs, Kent CT10 2JQ

De-bug Basic programs, help with m/code. Send tape & listing if short prog.
Andrew Price, 27 Ashwell Walk, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, Beds LU5 5QA ☎ 0582 868557

Grand Prix Simulator, Who Dares Wins 2, Speed King, Paperboy etc. plus pokes, maps, trillions of programs and help with Basic and machine code
Steven Flynn, 76 Dunlop Rd, Tilbury, Essex RM18 7AU

Oblivion, Locomotion, One Man + his Droid, Army Moves, Space Harrier, Project Volcano, Thunderzone, Gunstar.
James (11) ☎ (0458) 73926

Millions of pokes, maps, tips etc. Send SAE for full list
Scott Paterson (got it right now, we hope Scott!), 8 Moor Lane, Thornton, Liverpool L23 4TW

AA type-ins, Basic, DMP 2000, Adventure programming, Laser Basic, screen dumps, most football games.

Adrian Sill, 19 Sherwood Drive, 5 Lane Ends, Skellow, Doncaster, South Yorkshire DN6 8NY

Matchday II, Buggy Boy, Tetris, Nigel Mansell's Grand Prix, Soccer Boss, Jet Bike Simulator, Super Stunt Man.
Craig Thomson. ☎ (0698) 51177

Raid, 180, Star Raiders II, Beach Head II, Death Wake, Sir Lancelot, Footballer of the Year, Nonterraqueous, SD Snooker, GP Simulator, Leaderboard, Desert Fox, Aliens, Champ Basketball, Champ Baseball
Michael Dickinson, 281 Tyldesley Road, Atherton, M29 9AL

Solving Basic bug, most machine code programs. Enclose listing + description of program –) If poss enclose cassette with program on 464 only. If machine code enclose assembler listing.
Paul Jones, 78 Fitzwilliam Street, Swinton, Rotherham, S.Yorkshire, S64 8RW

Radzone, Ghosts and Goblins, Knight Tyme, Dragons Lair, Green Beret, Gauntlet, Feud, Starquake (codes), Bounder, Boggit.
David Brooke, 8 Birkby Grove, Bilton Grange, Hull, HU9 4PZ

Basic programming, some machine code.
Paul Bower, Elm Gable, Hermitage, Newbury, Berks. RG16 9SA. ☎ (0635) 200891

Feud, BMX Simulator, Equinox, Who Dares Wins 2, Frank Bruno's Boxing, Shogun, Green Beret, Paperboy, Terminus, Jailbreak, Curse of Sherwood, Nemesis, Ghostbusters, Willow Pattern, Amaurote, Spellbound, Hunchback, Bombjack
Basic programming, machine code programming, firmware calls, Amsdos calls + accessing them, adding second drives (3in + 5.25in), tape loading problems, multiface two, printer problems.

Kevin Bryant, Jessamine Cottage, Chapel Lane, Ashford Hill, Newbury, Berks. ☎ Tadley 71792

Programming in basic (mostly utilities), Protext, Toolkit (Beebugsoft), DMP 2000, Utopia, Printmaster, listings 15p (draft) or 30p (NLQ), Artwork (Kuma), tape only.
Matthew Cawley, 42 Hamilton Av, Sandycroft, Deeside, Clwyd, CH5 2PB

Stormbringer, Eagles Nest, Indiana Jones, Short Circuit, Curse of Sherwood, Shard of Inovar, Batty, Lightforce, Lord of the Rings, Worm in Paradise, Venom, some hacking.
Nicholas Roach, 5 Hintlesham Close, Stowmarket, Suffolk ☎ 0449 674848

Enduro Racer, Bombjack 1 and 2, Yie ar Kung Fu, Buggy Boy, basic programming.
Alex Kelly, 113 Potter Street, Northwood Middex, HA6 1QF

Send program and tape and I'll draw a loading screen for you. Enclose description. CPC 464 only.
Andy Van-Kerro, 42 The Avenue, Ramsey, Huntingdon, Cambs, PE17 1AU. ☎ 0487 813194 10am-10pm

3 Weeks in Paradise, Renegade, Knight Tyme, Ninja, Flash Gordon, Grand Prix Simulator, Ghosts and Goblins, Yie ar Kung Fu.
Mark Warriner, 92 Whitfield Avenue, Pickering, N.Yorks, YO18 7HY

Cobra, Yie ar Kung Fu, Green Beret, Bruce Lee, Rambo, Ghostbusters, Gauntlet, Gauntlet II, Mission Genocide, Chronos, Ninja, Trantor, word processor writing.
Andrew Given, 83 Dickson Street, Edinburgh EH6 8QH. ☎ 031 554 5001, call after 5pm.

Ikari Warriors, Football Managerre Europe, Into the Eagle's Nest & loadsamoregames.
Richard Ruane, 97 Cobden St, Darlington Co Durham DL1 4JD ☎ 0325 58745

Amstrad 464 disc, DMP 2000, wants penpals. SAE to **D Aspey, 111 Crawford Ave, Tyledsley Nr Manchester M29 8LS.**
☎ 0942 876997 weekend

Loadsagames.
Paul White, 17 Garnet Crescent, Salterbeck, Workington, Cumbria CA14 5ER

Over a hundred pokes, tips and mega-maps.
Martin Dillon 176 Coal Clough Lane, Burnley, Lancs BB114NJ

Basic, machine code, C, Forth, CP/M, Electronics, Graphics.
Kevin Groves, 11 St Edmunds Rd, Deal Kent,

Radzone, Ghosts and Goblins, Knight Tyme, Dragons Lair, Green Beret, Gauntlet, Feud, Starquake.
David Brooke, 8 Birkby Grove, Bilton Grange, Hull HU9 4PZ

Feeling helpful? Just send your name, address, phone number (say if you don't want it printed) and subjects on which you're offering help to: *Helpline*, Amstrad Action, 4 Queen Street, Bath, BA1 1EJ. Write on a postcard/back of a stuck down envelope and keep it short or you won't get in (or you'll get cut to 'loadsagames').

If you want help contact the appropriate Helpliner – not us. By post include a self-addressed, stamped envelope for the reply – or you won't get one. And phone only in decent hours!

Piracy is not welcome: don't try it, you'll get booted off. Keep it legal. And if you receive SAE's, for heaven's sake return them with some acknowledgement. If you want to come off *Helpline* write and say so.

ABSOLUTE BEGINNERS

Basic for beginners with ANDY WILTON

We now know two different sets of looping commands. Let's compare what they do

In a FOR-NEXT loop you set a variable to some starting value. Each time the loop is repeated a fixed number is added – the 'step size' – to this variable. The loop stops repeating once the variable goes over some given upper limit.

In WHILE-WEND loop, things are much simpler. You don't set or add to any variables, unless you give separate commands telling the CPC to do so. The loop just keeps repeating and does nothing else. It stops repeating when the WHILE condition stops being true.

Loops apocalypse

So far we've only skimmed the surface of what loops can let us do. Our program draws a square falling towards the bottom of the screen, but you could do much more complicated things with it if you wanted to. Using just one loop or even a series of loops one after another doesn't get at the real power of looping. Before we get any further we'll have to get rid of that falling-square program. We shall need it later on though, so rather than typing NEW straight away we want to save it.

It's a good habit before saving anything to label it by tacking a few REM statements to the top of the program. Six months later with a heap of cassettes or disks to sort out, you'll be glad you did.

```
1 REM Falling Squares
2 REM Absolute Beginners AA Feb 88
```

If you have a disk drive you've got things easy – just shove a formatted disk in the drive, type SAVE "square" (return), and after a few seconds of whirring you'll have your program safe and sound on your disk.

If you've got a drive-less 464, just put a cassette in the data recorder and type SAVE "square" just as you would for saving a program on disk. You will then be asked to Press REC and Play then any key. Do just that, and the program is saved. It'll take longer than a save-to-disk would, but for a program of this length it's probably worth the effort.

Now that you've saved the square-dropping program, type LIST. You'll find that the program is still quite unchanged. The SAVE command doesn't move the program onto your disk or cassette: it just makes a copy there, leaving the original intact in memory.

Knowing that we've got a copy safe on cassette or disk, we can use NEW to get rid of the original. When you've done that, try typing in this listing.

```
10 FOR a=1 TO 10
20 PRINT " 5 times ";a;" makes ";5*a
30 NEXT a
```

This just prints out the five-times table – hardly exciting stuff, I'm sure you'll agree. Now, modify line 20 and add new lines 5 and 35, so the program ends up looking like this:

```
5 FOR b=1 to 10
10 FOR a=1 TO 10
20 PRINT b; "times " ;a;" makes ";b*a
30 NEXT a
35 NEXT b
```

Try to guess what this is going to do. Then run it, to see if you were right.

Here we go loopy-loo!

Now you know what the program does, but the question is why? Well, think about the loop formed by lines 5 and 35. This tells the program to repeat all the lines in between – lines 10 to 30, in other words – while stepping through values of b from 1 to 10. We know what lines 10 to 30 used to do before we modified line 20: they just printed out the five-times table. The change to line 20 just means that they now print out the b - times table, whatever b is.

The first time through the FOR b=1 TO 10'...NEXT B loop stops repeating.

Our program has two separate loops, one inside the other. There is a special term for loops like this: we say they're nested. The outer loop – which starts first and ends last, in the case the FOR b loop made by lines 5 and 35 – simply tells the CPC to repeat the lines in between. These lines include loop commands that form an inner loop – the FOR and NEXT command in lines 10 to 30, in the case of our program.

As you know, the FOR b=1 TO 10 makes the CPC run through the outer loop ten times. Each one of these ten times, the inner loop is repeated ten times. In other words the line inside repeats the inner loop – line 20 – gets repeated 100 times. All that printing scrolls off the top of the screen pretty fast, but the program really does print 100 separate messages – take my word for it.

Let's try another program that makes this a bit clearer. NEW the times-table program and type this in instead:

```
10 PRINT "Line 10"
20 FOR  a=1 TO 3
30 PRINT "Line 30: a=";a
40 FOR b=1 TO 4
50 PRINT "Line 50: a=";a;" b=";b
60 NEXT b
70 PRINT "Line 70: a=";a
80 NEXT a
90 PRINT "Line 90"
```

You should now be able to see the flow of the program – the way it repeats lines according to the loop commands – by looking at the messages printed up when you run it.

Something nesty

Loop commands come in pairs. They tell the CPC to repeat all the lines between the start (FOR or WHILE) and the finish (NEXT or WEND) of the loop. If these repeated lines include the start and finish of another loop, that's okay – we just have a nested loop as above. But what happens if we have this second loop starting in the repeated lines and finishing after them?

Take a look at this listing and you'll see what I mean:

```
10 FOR a=1 TO 10
20 PRINT a
30 FOR b=1 TO 5
40 PRINT b
50 NEXT a
60 NEXT b
```

This is called bad or improper nesting, and the CPC can't cope with it. I can't see what it's supposed to do either. This kind of thing happens only if you're careless. If you're nesting loops, make sure the inner one is completely inside the outer. That way you'll always be OK.

All fall down

Nesting isn't just about putting FOR-NEXT loops one inside the other. You can nest WHILE-WEND loops, put FOR-NEXT inside WHILE-WEND's or vice-versa.

Reload the 'falling square' program you saved earlier. If you're a disk user simply put the disk onto which you saved back into the drive, the same way as before, and type Load "square".

The disk will whirr, you'll get the 'ready' prompt and, when you list it you'll find you've got the program back. Tape users have to rewind the tape and then type Load "square". You get the message press PLAY' and then any key. Do this, and your program loads back in.

Now you can experiment with your program. Try putting an outer FOR-NEXT loop around it to make it fall repeatedly.

You could even use the loop variable as a sideways co-ordinate so that the square falls slightly further over each time. ●

Next month *Absolute Beginners* moves onto GOSUB

LEARNING CURVE

Utilities for beginners – Pat McDonald at the wheel

POKE EASY PLUS +

£10.99 cass ● £15.99 disk, all CPCs
joystick/keys
Galeper Soft, 36 Weston Lane, Bridgetown, Totnes, S Devon TQ9 5UN

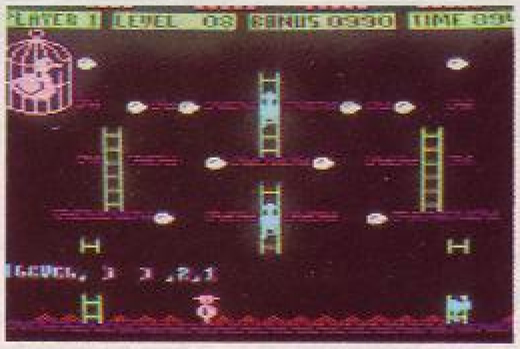
Poke Easy Plus+ is billed as 'The Ultimate Game Hacking Tool', a claim which would put it in the same league as the *Multiface/Insider* combination from Romantic Robot, which weighs in at a whopping £62.90. So how does it measure up to this big claim?

Can you hack it?

The purpose to which game hacking devices are put is simple: to extract cheats for games from the game program itself. In the usual course of events this would take some understanding of machine code: if you have 'The Knowledge' then finding such unsporting means to beat your CPC is no great sweat. The trouble is that for the great majority of games players machine code is too much hassle. So, rather than find out for themselves, they check out *Cheat Mode* in *AA* every month. This is the market *Poke Easy Plus+* is aimed at: people who don't know how games work.

You get a manual and a gift-wrapped disk. The manual is written in a light style, and you can imagine the author talking you through the tricky steps of using the program. The type quality is poor, although the layout is much better. Overall the manual's good. Using the program is not difficult: you reach a main menu with a few different options. There are facilities to de-protect games (including DJL speedlock, Firebird and headerless) – but note that the backups are fingerprinted for easy identification. Pirate copies are likely to be traced.

Poke Easy Plus+ achieves a high standard of actually finding pokes for games. It includes the facility for finding them on disk as well as on tape, and there is also a 'level' change facility. What's more to the point is that novices will find it far easier to use than a conventional disassembler, and after a while it becomes second nature.



▲ *Poke Easy* goes to work on a Chuckie Egg

Generic programs like this are often jacks of all trades. *Poke Easy Plus+* is more reliable than most, but it still isn't perfect.

GOOD NEWS
- Great introduction to hacking.
- Super price.
- Terrific manual.

BAD NEWS
- Presentation less than brilliant.
- Can't cope with everything.

TINY DESK TOP PUBLISHER

£6 ● 6128 only
Microdata, 221 Rockingham Rd, Kettering, Northants NN16 9JB

Desk top publishing is becoming ever more popular. So it's pleasing to see a program that doesn't have either the price tag of *Stop Press* or the bugs of *Fleet Street Editor*.

The subject shouldn't need much of an introduction by now: DTP is the solution to the age-old problem of getting the printed page laid out according to what the writer wants, rather than trusting the discretion of a printer. Broadly speaking, it involves laying a page out on your trusty computer (CPC in this case), putting in illustrations and headlines to taste, and having the final result printed out before your very eyes.

Tiny Desk Top Publisher is a simple program that can nevertheless be useful for the occasional page or advert. Setting up a page is simple – the programs runs in mode 2 (80 columns of text), and the physical page is split up into three distinct areas. Any one area can be viewed at a time.

(It should be borne in mind that these three sections make an area slightly in excess of a length of A4. So it makes sense to leave the bottom of a document blank, unless you are using particularly long paper.)

Pictures too

Putting text onto the screen is pretty simple, using just the cursor keys to select the target area. The size of characters can be altered, although there are only five different sizes to choose from.

The good news is, different font styles can be loaded into the *TDTP*, and they are in the standard format for such programs. So creating your own styles shouldn't prove difficult. Using DTP always involves some form of illustration. The *TDTP* supports this fairly well, with a few built in tools to help draw lines, boxes etc. A few items of clip art are included, but they are saved in standard Amstrad format.

The practical upshot is that the program can use any standard graphics formats, and cut sections of them out: imagine the fun you could have mixing and matching loading screeens from games.

Mind you, you'd have to process them through some sort of convertor for the different graphic modes. Can't have everything, I suppose.

The most important part of any DTP package – the printout – is no hassle to use. A standard print for page checking takes 15 minutes, but for real quality the time lengthens to about 1.5 hours per page.

So, getting it right before final printing is even more important.

As you would expect at the price, *Tiny Desk Top Publisher* cannot match a full-price DTP program.



▲ DTP for six quid – can't be bad!

What it can be useful for is for someone who doesn't know much about DTP, but would like to see it in action without going to the heavy expense of buying a new program. At the price you can hardly go wrong!

GOOD NEWS
- A good way to try DTP.
- Cheap and cheerful.
- Good for the occasional page.

BAD NEWS
- Manual lacks a lot...
- and was produced with the program.

THE LOOK

A regular feature on CPC graphics in the company of PAT McDONALD

This month we begin the rather large task of programming some sprites on the humble CPC. I do hope you've been reading over the past few months, because I'll be drawing rather heavily on what has gone before.

So here we start to look at the problem and solution in total: what your average system analyst might call an overview of the system.

(But then, what does your average system analyst really know?)

The first thing to bear in mind is what sprites are. It's all very well this technical thingummy rabbiting on about how to program them, but if you've never met the concept before, then a million pages of listings won't help much.

Sprites are simply shapes that can be printed on the screen. A rather crude form of sprite is the character, such as you are reading now. These are patterns of pixels that form intelligible shapes. Sprites are more encompassing, in that they do not have a fixed size or spacing: want to see a sprite? *Just load up a video game.* Those pretty shapes (spaceships, gun toting psychos, exploding piglets) – they all come under the one heading of sprites.

Sprite idea

But it's no easy job being a sprite – not on the Amstrad, at least. Dedicated arcade machines have multiple computers built into them, just to take care of all the graphical jiggery-pokery. The Amstrad does not have so much as one transistor to deal with sprites. Anything in that direction is the responsibility of programmers.

At first sight, it seems very simple to set up a routine to handle the problem. All it is is a simple printing routine that can handle larger shapes than normal, in more than one colour, right? Wrong. Imagine for a second what would happen if you could type in anything, anywhere on the screen at all. Pretty soon you'd have gibberish covering all your work area. There must be some provision of removing sprites, cleanly and evenly.

Also what happens when your missile/laser beam/plasma bolt hits the spaceship/robot/alien? Clearly, there must be some sort of control mechanism, to register when sprites hit each other or collide. Often what makes or breaks a game is how closely it permits you to approach an enemy without touching it involuntarily. This increases the gameplay, as you can narrowly avoid death by using skill. Or, in the editor's case, die every time by not

Got the time right?

Not only the secret of good humour, timing is also the reason why I can say that I can make the sprite routines activate themselves just after the screen has finished being updated.

On the CPC interrupts occur 300 times per second: the screen is updated every 50th of a second.

Thus, for each raster frame update, there are six interrupts. (An interrupt serves as a trigger to some high priority task – like sprites.)

If we number these from zero to five, then you can see that frame flyback (when the raster beam moves to the top of the screen) occurs on interrupt number zero.

If instead, we use interrupt number five as our trigger to the sprite routine to go to work, then almost twice as much time is available for printing. Simple eh?

The gallery



● Confirmed Star Wars fan Gary A Marshall from Swanwick can draw a mean picture.



● Alternative: a blocky Gryzor from M S Tara of Birstall

Divided by a common language

This is a very simple trick, attained with the help of the CRTC (6845 – remember?). A word of caution though: if you are using a CPC with a none PAL system (this will be generally north American users) then I'm afraid none of these routines in *The Look* are going to work too well. The feeling's mutual – we can't use any of your software either.

The register to use on the CRTC is number 4. Its normal value is 38 – try writing something different into it by using:–

```
OUT &BC00,&4:OUT
&BD00,n
```

Values of between 30 and 40 work best for n. This only moves the screen by character sized chunks: to move it by pixels use register number 5. Small steps for n, between 0 and 7, work best: for larger increments register 3 should be used. Use:–

```
OUT &BC00,&3:OUT
&BD00,n
```

The more astute readers will note that this opens up the path for pixel perfect vertical scrolling.

Coming soon to *The Look*...

having any skill in the first place *(don't think I'm not reading this, big nose – ed).*

A further point to bear in mind is what happens to the backdrops when sprites pass over them. Now, backdrops are those huge chunks of the screen that play dead and don't do anything, like the maze in *Pacman* or the jungle in *Operation Wolf*. In an ideal sprite program, when a sprite passes in front of the backdrop, it wouldn't leave a trail or change the backdrop once it had been printed in front of it.

Routine check-up

So we want routines that print sprites, check when they overlap (and do something about it), don't alter the backdrops on games and can be printed at any pixel location. This is quite a tall order for software alone, and one further complication is the raster refresh rate. (A raster, just in case you'd forgotten, is the pattern of horizontal scanning lines traced by an electron beam.)

The problem lies in that the sprite programs must be synchronised to the same rate as the TV output. If it runs faster, then you're not going to see the results. If it runs out of phase, then some really flickery sprites are the result, as they'll be printed in different halves at different speeds. Yes, some commercial games suffer from this!

Don't make a mesh!

The CPC does have a feature built into its operating system to allow meshing with the frame flyback rate. It's a little signal which floats up and down, and I'm afraid I'll have to ignore it. Consider the two diagrams: in the one on the left, the sprites are printed to the operating system requirements: on the right, my system comes into its own.

You see, sprite printing is such a long-winded process on the Amstrad that you want as much time as possible in which to accomplish the task. Also remember that, ideally, the sprites should be able to keep up with the TV signal.

In the example on the left, the sprite routines can start work when the raster refresh beam on the TV or monitor is at the top of the screen: on the right, the same routines can get started earlier, just after the refresh beam has left the middle section of the screen where the CPC prints to, and it is working on the border area.

Drawbacks

Ok, nobody's perfect. It'll be necessary to use a couple of OUT commands to set up the screen as it should be. This means the playing area will be nearer the top of the TV picture than usual, that's all. ●



▲ Normal Amstrad flicker free interrupt...



▲ Gain time by using this one

● Next month we continue with a look at how the sprites are stored, and ways in which to input them into the computer



● Beano enthusiast Jonathan Rowe of Newbury is responsible for this



● Paul Williams from Flamstead occasionally impersonates Domark loading screens



● Is Bob Williams of Kesgrave colour blind?



● James Davison sent in a big,big collection. This alone wins £20!

BAR CPM

First Steps *part six with RICHARD MONTEIRO*

After last month's galloping introduction to the various transient programs available on CPM 2.2 and 3.1 system disks, it's back to a more leisurely canter as we inspect each command more closely.

There's no point dealing with the transient programs in alphabetical order: some are too obscure to be of any real interest to beginners. (ASM, for instance, is only worth mentioning if you're competent at 8080 assembler: it creates machine code from assembly source, if you really must know. We'll deal with it properly in time.) For now, though, let's tackle file copying and the omni-talented PIP.

PIP has the memorable acronym Peripheral Interchange Program and, as its name suggests, moves files between peripherals. The peripherals in this case will generally be disk drives – although the screen, parallel port (with printer connected) and serial interface (with modem or serial printer attached) are just as plausible.

PIP can also rename a file after copying it, combine two or more files into one and copy a character file from disk to some logical output file.

Not surprisingly PIP has a daunting number of possible parameters.

PIPing Tom

However, at its simplest it is just as easy to understand as the AMSDOS command.

There are two ways of using PIP. You can issue a command which will load the program, transfer the file from one place to another, and then reload CPM. Alternatively you can load PIP into memory and use it repeatedly from there.

CPM 2.2 users will find PIP useless for copying files from one disk to another using a single drive – it's impossible. This is because disks can't be swapped once the copying process starts. (If you have two disk drives or use CPM Plus then you won't encounter these problems.) FILECOPY and DISCCOPY are provided to overcome CPM 2.2's shortcomings. More on these elsewhere.

You have probably realised that PIP doesn't work identically in the two CPM environments. You don't have to worry about that this month: all forthcoming examples will work with both versions.

Assuming you have two drives – 3.1 users don't need two drives as CPM will prompt for disk A and disk B – type the following:

PIP B:=A:AMSDOS.COM

Make sure you have a blank, formatted disk in drive B. This copies AMSDOS.COM from drive A to drive B (or disk A to disk B). Note that the destination drive is put first. The command, when translated to plain English, says, 'Let drive B take a copy of the file AMSDOS.COM from drive A'. The syntax is the same as Basic's LET command.

Taking the PIP

The above is the simplest form of disk-to-disk file transfer that you can make PIP do. You can add a whole host of options and use wildcards to specify more than one file in a single PIP instruction.

You can save the file copy under a different name by using the required name after the destination drive letter. For instance,

PIP B:ANOTHER.COM=A:AMSDOS.COM

copies AMSDOS.COM from drive A to drive B and changes its name en route to ANOTHER.COM.

To save a copy of the same file on the same disk, you must specify different filenames either side of the separator (the equals sign in this case). Source and destination drive letters can be omitted:

PIP ANOTHER.COM=AMSDOS.COM.

This is just the start, but sadly that's all there's room for. See you next month! ●

Join us next month when we investigate the differences between PIP 2.2 and PIP 3.1.

File copying – the easy way

Strictly for CPM 2.2 users. Filecopy copies a named file from one disk to another. Use the command like this:

FILECOPY filename.ext

Remember to include the file extension (denoted here by ext), if there is one, otherwise you'll be treated to one of CPM user-friendly error messages. Wildcards are permitted, so FILECOPY *.COM is acceptable.

Entering a command similar to the above results in a prompt asking you to insert the source disk (the disk containing the file you wish to copy). Once the file has been loaded into memory you will be prompted again; this time for the destination disk (the disk you wish to send the file).

COPYFILE is the same as FILECOPY – but it works with two drives, rather than just one.

How to recover erased files!

A few issues back we lied. It was only a very tiny white lie, and was for your own good (© R. Nixon). We stated that once a file had been erased, it was gone for good. Well, that's *almost* true. By using a sector editor or the public domain program UNERASE.COM, it is possible to recover the deleted file as long as the erased file hasn't been over-written.

The UNERASE file, if you're interested, is available from most good PD libraries. Try PD Software (☎ 08926 63298) or Wacci (☎ 01-898 1090). Or try *Type-Ins* this issue (page 68)!

If you have the file in question but don't know how to use it, here's what you do. Enter UNERASE filename at the A> prompt. The parameter filename can be left blank (in which case the computer unerases all the deleted files it finds) or consist of a letter and wildcard characters. All unerased files are plonked into USER area 5. This is done to ensure there are no conflicting filenames in the directory.

Many thanks to B. Rowley of Bradford-on-Avon for the above: a crisp (salt-and-vinegar flavoured) tenner is on the way to you. Remember any tip we print here wins £10. The address to write to is: *Richard Monteiro's Bar CPM*, 4 Queen Street, Bath, BA1 1EJ.

FIRST BYTES

Assemble here series with RICHARD MONTEIRO

Your first assembly language program this month. You'll need the cover cassette freebie, *MAA*, or some other assembler. Get ready!

Doubtless you're itching to get down to writing assembly programs. But there are a few things to be wary of before plunging headfirst:

- Unlike Basic programs, assembly programs must be told where to sit in memory. Basic is a very friendly programming environment and consequently it works out many tedious problems – memory management is one. You must decide where assembly programs should start in memory. Unfortunately the CPC's 64K of memory isn't all free for you to play with. Avoid, at all costs unless you're 100% sure you know what you're doing, locations &0 to &40 (RST vectors) and &A000 to &BFFF (system variables and firmware jump vectors). Screen ram lies between &C000 and &FFFF – that's definitely out.
- The END command can be used in BASIC listings to tell the interpreter that there are no more Basic instruction to process. Basic is so friendly that it doesn't require the END statement. Unfortunately this isn't true of machine code programs. If the Z80 processor doesn't find an end instruction, it will jump about memory executing whatever it finds there. If you're lucky control will return to you, but it's much more likely that the computer will crash or lock up. While a crash won't damage the computer, it can be immensely annoying if you lose an hour's work.
- Writing in assembler means you gain full control of the computer and its hardware. Desirable? Yes. But also very daunting. If you step out of line once – that is, access a restricted area of memory or miscalculate an address – you will more than likely crash the computer.

For real

Most assemblers – but not *MAA* – use the pseudo opcode ORG for specifying the start position in memory of machine code programs. For instance, ORG &8000 would force your assembly program to start at memory location &8000. Use locations &4000 (16384) to &9000 (36864) until you become more familiar with the CPC's memory map.

RET is the instruction used to end a machine code program. This must be placed at the end of your assembly program. RET works in much the same way as Basic's RETURN. But now we're now jumping the gun. Let's keep things simple.

Assemble here

Following is your first assembly program. There are two versions; one for use with *MAA* and the other for use with Maxam or similar.

MAA version first. Load *MAA* and type DELETE -170. Then add the line 3761 DATA ld a r,ed,5f,0. Save *MAA*. Finally enter this listing:

```
10 'ld b,32
20 'ld a r
30 'add a b
30 'ld (,&6050) a
40 'call ,&bb5a
50 'ret
60 'end
```

Type RUN after entering the above. Hit the 1 key and press Return. Slowly the program will assemble. Press any key when you see 'end' on screen. Press ESC twice to exit the program. Enter CALL &6000 at Basic 's Ready prompt.

A character will appear on screen. Congratulations, your first program was a success. This is what it does. The B register is loaded with decimal 32. The value in R is placed in the accumulator. R is known as the refresh register; it's a reasonable source for random numbers. Next the contents of A and B are added together. The result ends up in A.

The value in A is then placed in memory location &6050. CALL &BB5A is a jump to the firmware – this won't be covered for a while so just accept that it works – which simply prints the Ascii character whose value is held in A. Finally RET returns you to Basic. Simple really. ●

Maxam version:

```
ORG &6000      ;start position in
                memory
LD B,31        ;place 31 decimal in
                B reg
LD A,R         ;load A with the R's
                contents
ADD A,B        ;Add B contents to A
                contents
LD (&6050),A   ;put value of A
                in loc &6050
CALL &BB5A     ;call a system print
                routine
RET            ;return to Basic
```

That's more than enough excitement for one issue. We'll be back next month with more assembly instructions for you to tinker with.

`HACKERS ONLY

As was revealed last issue, the high and low halves of the IX and IY can be split to make four 8-bit registers. These possibilities aren't documented in official Zilog literature, but if you experiment you'll discover the truth. The ability to manipulate these four extra registers can prove incredibly useful – particularly on the CPC where the alternative register set is used by the operating system.

The new instructions – a cutdown list of which appears below – handle the individual halves of the index registers and bear a striking resemblance to H and L register operations. For example, LD A,(HL) has the code 7E and LD A,(IY+2) has the code FD 7E 06. Similarly LD A,H has the code 7C. Of course, there's no published LD A,YH (YH denoting the high bit of the IY register) code. If you use the code FD 7C, however, you'll find it works as expected: it loads the accumulator with the high byte of the IY register. Any flag changes that result from the hidden instructions are the same for the equivalent H, L or HL instructions. See what you can do with this lot:

ADD A,XH	DD 84	ADD A,YH	FD 84	LD A,XH	DD 7C	LD A,YH	FD 7C
ADD A,XL	DD 85	ADD A,YL	FD 85	LD A,XL	DD 45	LD A,YL	FD 45
CP XH	DD BC	CP YH	FD BC	LD XH,A	DD 67	LD YH,A	FD 67
CP XL	DD BD	CP YL	FD BD	LD XL,A	DD 6F	LD YL,A	FD 6F
DEC XH	DD 25	DEC YH	FD 25	LD XH,XL	DD 65	LD YH,YL	FD 65
DEC XL	DD 2D	DEC YL	FD 2D	LD XL,XH	DD 6C	LD YL,YH	FD 6C
INC XH	DD 24	INC YH	FD 24	LD XH,nn	DD 26 nn	LD YH,nn	FD 26 nn
INC XL	DD 2C	INC YL	FD 2C	LD XL,nn	DD 2E nn	LD YL,nn	FD 2E nn

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ACTION TEST

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ROY OF THE ROVERS

Gremlin ● £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk joystick/keys

Way back in February 1988 we ran a news story on a forthcoming release from Piranha, *Roy of the Rovers*. A few months later Piranha sank without trace and the game licence went with it. Gremlin decided to get on their skuba gear and dive down for the licence. They found it and now, a year after the news story, we have the game.

Just before a vital fund raising match the Melchester Rovers football team has been kidnapped. If enough funds aren't raised by the match then Melchester Rovers will close and the ground will be turned into a pile of rubble (Spurs got their two points back, I see). Roy Race is the only one they didn't get and now he must rush around town looking for his kidnapped team mates. Before the kick off he must return to the football ground and then play with however many players he's rescued. He might even have to play alone. Guess who you play?

The game's split into two sections – the adventure and the five-a-side football match – but if you want to you can just play the match. In part one you wander around Melchester using a mixture of keyboard controls and pull down menus. Across the top of the screen are four menus: command, object, special and help. The rest is taken up with a flick screen view of the streets of Melchester.

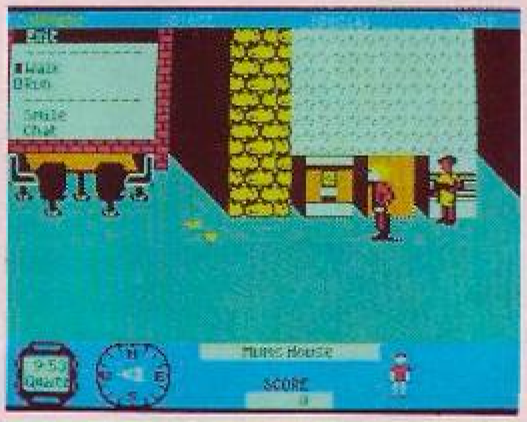
With the command menu you can run, walk, smile, chat or fight. The special menu is used to wait, go home or visit mum (what a nice boy you are!). Other options appear occasionally. When at home you can brush your teeth, to keep that wonderful smile of yours, or rest. Finally you can get some clues with the help menu – it costs points though.

SECOND OPINION

"Last month Codemasters had a crack at Ocean's* Matchday II *crown as THE football game. Now it's Gremlin's go. Still, the novelty value of the 'kidnapping' hocus-pocus is a welcome addition. A good shot."

SC

GREEN SCREEN:
Fine



▲ Roy visits his mum

By wandering around you'll pick up clues and maybe track down one of your team mates. Supporters of the opposing team and hoodlums lurk around the town trying to stop you from rescuing your fellow players. Whether you've found them all by 7:30 or not you have to load the football game and then play for the sake of the club.

The football game itself is fairly standard stuff, using the flick screen approach rather than a scrolling pitch. There are no goal posts to shoot at: you just have to guess where the goal is, but it's not difficult. One or two players can take part in the match. Your computer opponent is tough to beat and the odds are stacked against you if you have fewer players than the computer.

A good tune plays as the game loads, but there are none in the game itself. Sound effects are adequate and there are nice effects in the football match.

Mixing a football game and a menu-driven adventure has worked well to produce a fun game, although you're only likely to play the adventure until you've solved it and then you're left with a football game. At that point you're better off with *Matchday II* (*AA* 28, 86%). **GBH**

FIRST DAY TARGET:
Rescue two players



The Verdict

GRAPHICS 69%
- Colour sprites and scenery.
- ■ What happened to the goal posts?

SONICS 63%
- Good title tune.

GRAB FACTOR 76%
- Challenging adventure...
- And above average football game too.

STAYING POWER ... 67%
- Tough computer opponent.
- ■ You only get to play football when the adventure has been solved.

AA RATING 74%
- Nice mix of strategy and arcade game.

MASTER GAME

NETHERWORLD

Hewson • £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk joystick/keys

Take a trip into another time and dimension, my friend. Journey with us into a world where good and evil are locked in eternal conflict: visit the planet Netherworld. Stay awhile – maybe even stay forever. All this good and evil beating each other around the head stuff is one thing, but when you get stuck in the middle it's just too much.

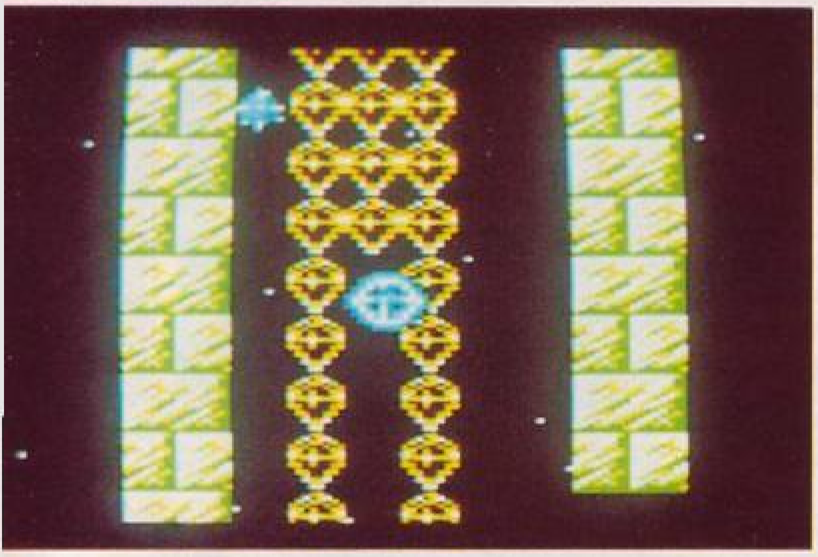
Escape from Netherworld can only be accomplished by one method, collecting diamonds. (No, don't ask me to explain the logic of that one: just do as you're told, OK?) These pretty rocks sit around the planet just waiting to be collected, although some do hide in apparently inaccessible places. Plenty of hostile bad guys lurk around and do their utmost to kill you.

Each level is made up of a large eight way scrolling playing area with an information panel at the bottom of the screen. This tells you how many lives you have left, diamonds still to be collected, score, level and time remaining to complete the level.



▲ Diamond hunting

Before the game itself begins you're offered a choice of starting level: one, five or nine – a nice feature to stop you having to battle your way through screens you've done before just to get to the one you keep dying on. Instead you can go there immediately and die anyway!



▲ Still loads of diamonds left to collect

On the first level your mission is to find and collect 27 diamonds within the time limit. There are spitting demons and mines to avoid and the only tricky part is finding the secret door into a horde of diamonds. To travel to the next level you then have to find and go through a teleporter. Later levels have rocks that must be converted into diamonds, spitting goats' heads (a very bad habit and definitely anti-social) and alien generators which produce shield-bashing aliens. Smashing through walls occasionally with the aid of a brick smasher (comes in handy, that) is also necessary.

Sometimes you'll see a bunch of question marks drifting around and if you take your chances and collect them one of four things happens. The two good are an extra life gained or invulnerability (the ship changes colour to indicate this). An uncontrollable ship or the controls being reversed are the bad effects. If you don't want to take the risk then don't pick up any question marks. It's just asking for trouble (sorry!).

Scrolling of the playing area is jerky, but it makes up for it in speed. The sprites are a little flickery, but not the sort of flicker that make you bang your head against the wall. A good continuous tune plays throughout the game, but not only do you have the option to turn it on or off, you can even adjust the volume of it. Sound effects can likewise be turned on or off, or have their vol-

Monstrous regiment

Alien Eggs
Scramble them if they get in your way.

Alien Generators
Produce little aliens that should be annihilated.

Demons
Spit acid bubbles that deplete your energy.

Goats' Heads
Spits acidic blood at you. Not nice!

Mine your own business

BOUNDER MINE
Flies in a straight line until it hits something. It then turns 90° and continues.

HOVER MINE
Moves vertically and is deadly to touch.

SCANNER MINE
Moves around objects in a clockwise direction.

Remember *Boulderdash?*

When Mirrorsoft released *Boulderdash* all that time ago (it was reviewed in the first issue of *AA*: 93%), it was immediately hailed as one of the great originals – 'an instant classic', as wise old Pete Connor described it. You controlled Rockford, a stick-insect figure with an impatiently tapping foot, who has to collect jewels by running into them. The game got its name from its underground setting: you dashed along a cave avoiding the boulders that threatened to give you a first class flat top – head and all!

Along the way you encountered peculiar amoeba and magic walls. The former grew with time to encompass any surrounding earth, and if you dropped a boulder onto the magic walls it was transformed into jewels.

Of course, the real reason we're going on about *Boulderdash* at such length – apart from the fact that it's a brilliant game, and *Netherworld* has torn a page right from its book – is that Chris Anderson, boss of Future Publishing (and therefore the bloke who signs our pay-cheques... eventually) is an absolute *Boulderdash* freak.

(Whaddya mean never mind the *Boulderdash?)* He even took time off from shouting at us to write a superb playing guide way back in *AA2* (p.88). We timidly knocked on his door and asked him for his opinion of *Netherworld* as a *Boulderdash* clone, and he said: 'YOU'RE FIRED! GET OUT! DON'T COME BACK! – Oh, what's that? *Boulderdash* clone you say? Give that here...'

And that was the last we or anyone has seen of him. Perhaps we'll be able to bring you a report next month...



▲ Converting rocks into diamonds by a simple process of squeezing



▲ A naughty spitting goat



▲ Surrounded by skulls



▲ Ready to teleport

The Verdict

GRAPHICS 69%
- Colourful sprites and background.
- Some flicker on the sprites.

SONICS 74%
- Excellent continuous tune.
- Tolerable sound effects.

GRAB FACTOR 93%
- Starts off fairly easy...
- And more expert players can start on tougher screens.

STAYING POWER ... 86%
- Loads of levels and they get much more difficult
- May get frustrating if you keep getting stuck on the same level.

AA RATING 91%
- Buy this and you'll nether look back.

ume adjusted. They're not as good as the tune, but still acceptable. It's better to have either effects or music because they do tend to clash at times. Go for music.

In many ways it plays like that old classic *Boulderdash*: collecting diamonds, changing rocks into diamonds, having a time limit to do it in and loads of levels to complete. It has been refined a little to make it as good as if not better than *Boulderdash*. There's plenty to keep you occupied and the levels get progressively harder as you get better at completing them. Start hunting for those gift tokens that Aunty Agatha bought you and head for the high streets.

GBH

FIRST DAY TARGET:
Complete levels one to three

SECOND OPINION

"Yeah! OK so the scrolling's somewhat jerky, but at least it's fast. And you do get a relatively gentle introduction, with a realistic mission to accomplish. Don't be fooled, though: it gets seriously tough a little later on!"

SC

THE SCREEN IN GREEN:
all clear



▲ Jukka Tapanimaki

FINNISH

Born 28 years ago in beautiful Finland and living in Tampere, 500 miles from the Russian border, Jukka did his National Service in the army before going to University. 'Then I discovered computers were much more interesting!' he says.

His first full-length game was *Octopolis*, a platform game-cum-shoot-em-up.

The logical problems in *Netherworld* may owe something to Jukka's other chief interest: chess. He is 'addicted' to the game, he says.

He works with Jori 'the Hubbard of Finland' Olkkonen, who wrote the excellent continuous tune you hear as you play *Netherworld*.

Among Jukka's other interests are horror movies and science fiction novels. 'I even wrote an SF novel once', he admits: 'but it was 350 pages of rubbish!'

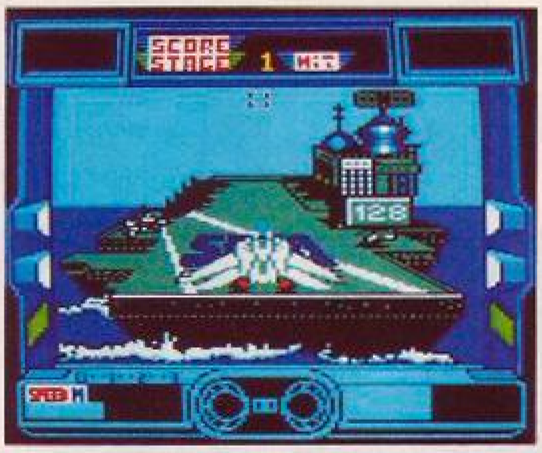
EXCLUSIVE!

AFTERBURNER

Activision ● £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk
joystick/keys

AA RAVE

In the arcades *Afterburner* is a furiously fast shoot-em-up that demands lightning reactions, a blur of a trigger finger – and no brains. When it first announced that it was going to come out on home micros there were plenty of sniggers from people who said that it simply couldn't be done. Indeed it has to be admitted that we here at *AA* were among them.



▲ Taking off from the carrier

Now we've got our greedy mitts on the CPC version – you read it here first, folks! – it faces the ultimate test at the hands of a departing imbecile *(i.e. Gary's going. No flowers please – ed)*. The plot: fly your F-14 Thunder Cat through stage after stage of mindless violence. The screen is composed of a status panel at the bottom which shows how many missiles you have left, lives and fuel. At the top of the screen is your score, number of planes hit and the stage. The rest of the screen contains the playing area with your plane viewed from the rear. The ground moves towards you and enemy aircraft appear on screen from the front and rear.

Stage one takes place over open sea and all you have to do on this and every stage is survive until the end. At this point you go onto the next level and are awarded bonus points for number of kills. A sight drifts around the screen according to how you fly the plane and if it crosses the position of an enemy aircraft a missile is locked on it. It's just a matter of hitting the fire button to destroy your enemy. There's also a continual stream of machine gun fire from you. Stage two is similar except that you're flying over land instead and after that you get to link up with a plane to re-fuel and re-arm.

On later stages you have to navigate through valleys and destroy ground targets and re-fuelling sometimes takes place on an airstrip rather than in mid-air. Airstrip re-fuelling is hysterical, you get to see tiny sticks with dots on top walk towards the plane making a vain attempt to impersonate men. That's about it as far as gameplay goes, just blast away forever, or until you get sick of it anyway.



▲ Flying along looking for trouble. Don't worry, it won't be long in coming!

SECOND OPINION

"If only you could see me now, sitting here eating my hat. I scoffed when they said Afterburner *was coming out in a CPC conversion, but having seen it now I'm quite happy to take it all back. It may not be* Mastermind, *but then again* Mastermind *isn't* Afterburner.
Highly recommended." **SC**

GREEN SCREEN: perfectly playable



▲ Shot down and heading for the drink



Graphically it's very good, it's fast and colourful with plenty of detail. The graphics on the title screen look very nice with the moving balls. It's a pity that sound isn't up to the same standard, though, and all you get are a couple of explosions.

The conversion from the arcades is done surprisingly well considering the nature of the game. It's still fast and furious, which is what the game's all about, and even though you don't get to use your brain much at least your fingers get some exercise. Unfortunately this is one of those that works much better in the arcades simply because you often find it on a hydraulyic set-up that throws you around as the plane moves. Unless you fancy setting up your CPC on your bed and bouncing around as you play, you'll miss that excitement. Never mind, it's still fabulous! **GBH**

FIRST DAY TARGET: 250,000

The Verdict

GRAPHICS 89%
- Very fast and smooth.
- Lots of detail and colour.

SONICS 45%
- Just a few explosions.

GRAB FACTOR 81%
- Basically just a shoot-em-up.
- But an accurate conversion.

STAYING POWER 72%
- Level after level to battle through...
- The only difference being more enemies.

AA RATING 81%
- A good game, especially since it's an arcade conversion.

AA RAVE

RETURN OF THE JEDI

Domark ● £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk joystick/keys

Way back in *AA29* there was *Star Wars* (37%), followed in *AA38* by *The Empire Strikes Back* (51%). Now the trilogy gets rounded off with the final instalment. Can Luke, Leia, Han and Chewie (hurrah!) save the universe or will it fall into the hands of evil Darth and the Emperor (boo!)? And, as a matter of somewhat more pressing importance to the earthlings at Domark (they *are* earthlings, I suppose?), is the third of the series any better than the other two mediocre efforts?

The Verdict

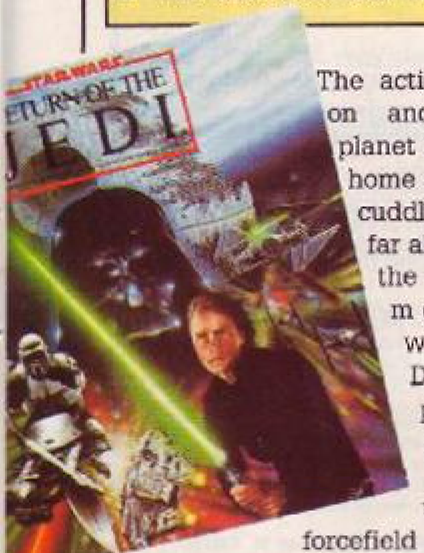
GRAPHICS 64%
- Best diagonal scrolling in game yet.
- Chunky, but colourful graphics.

SONICS 29%
- Step, bang, kaboom.

GRAB FACTOR 86%
- Not mentally stimulating, just blast and dodge.
- OK, so all you do is blast things and dodge them. What's wrong with that?

STAYING POWER .. 76%
- Three skill levels...
- Each one is more of the same.

AA RATING 82%
- The best of the *Star Wars* games.



The action takes place on and around the planet Endor. Endor is home to the cute and cuddly Ewoks and far above its surface the Empire's latest mega-death weapon, a new Death Star. At present it's still uncompleted and only protected by a forcefield generated on the surface of Endor. A Rebel fleet is at this very moment travelling through hyperspace (hopefully they won't get swallowed by a dog – just thought I'd throw in a quick *Hitchhikers* reference to check you're still awake) to destroy the Death Star, but they need the forcefield deactivating.

Luke, Leia, Han and Chewie get the dubious honour of deactivating the forcefield. Once that's been done you get to fly the Milenium falcon right inside the Death Star and shoot the reactor core. Getting out of there as fast as possible is your next problem because otherwise you'll play a very active part – a radioactive part, indeed – in the Death Star's destruction.

Stage one is set on Endor with Leia racing towards the Ewok village on a



● A tie on your tail

speeder bike with Imperial Stormtroopers in hot pursuit. Trees, logs and the occasional Ewok trap get in your way and you also have to deal with the enemy.

Reach the village and you then control an Imperial Walker guided by the hairy hands of Chewbacca. Logs and rocks have to be destroyed or avoided, as do the occasional Imperial Walkers. Meanwhile Lando Calrissian is flying towards the Death Star in the Millenium Falcon and the action switches between the two every so often.

Eventually Lando gets inside the Death Star and you have to guide him

SECOND OPINION

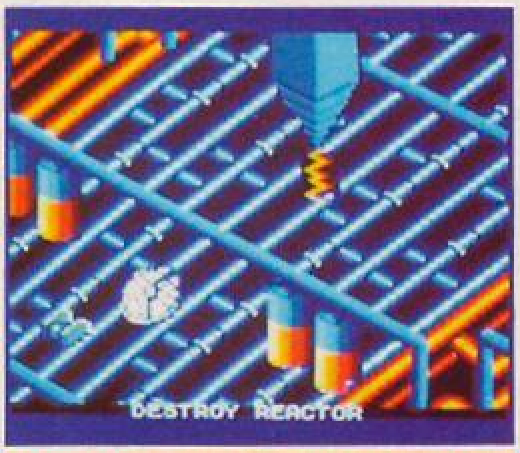
"Here's something of a novelty: a Domark game that's more than just hype. There's some real gameplay and skill involved, and some of the later levels are quite tough. I like it – hope they can keep up the good work!" **PbM**

GREEN SCREEN: *Fine*

towards the reactor. Tie fighters are pursuing you and must be dealt with in the usual, predictable way. Should you reach the reactor you have to blast it and then get out of there fast the same way that you got in.



● Rebels 1, Empire 0



● Shoot the reactor and then get out – fast!

There are three difficulty levels: easy, medium and hard. On the easy level you don't ride in the Imperial Walker, but instead go straight to the attack on the Death Star. With the medium level you don't get the Death Star approach, which is available only on the hard level. Every time you destroy the Death Star the level increases and things get tougher, but the points awards become greater.

Although the diagonal scrolling is a bit on the jerky side it's still very good. The sprites are rather chunky, but at least they're colourful. Sound effects are something that you might as well forget about, all you get are laser blasts, explosions and walker steps.

At last Domark seem to have come up with a decent Star Wars game. As a matter of fact they seem to be producing better games in general at the moment. Long may it continue! **GBH**

FIRST DAY TARGET: Score 200,000 points



● Dodge the trees on Endor

!! NOW SPEEDTRANS PLUS HAS EVEN MORE TO OFFER !!

SPEEDTRANS PLUS2

For CPC6128 (or 464/664 with DK Tronics 64K (or larger) Memory)
Once the programs has been transferred to disc IT WILL RUN ON ANY CPC

SPEEDTRANS PLUS2 now handles the VERY LATEST Speedlock types automatically. No need to hold a key down at anytime during loading. SPEEDTRANS PLUS2 also saves 99% of opening screens and saves them in their full colours

FULLY AUTOMATIC – JUST ONE KEYPRESS * ONLY ONE PROGRAM TO RUN WHICH FINDS THE SPEEDLOCK TYPE AUTOMATICALLY * WILL TRANSFER ORIGINAL AND MANY OF TODAYS SPEEDLOCK PROGRAMS * NO FIDDLING OR MEDDLING – WRITTEN WITH THE AMATEUR IN MIND * AUTOMATIC DISC FILENAMES * NO WASTED DISC SPACE – SAVES THE CORRECT AMOUNT OF GAME CODE * SAVES 99% OF OPENING SCREENS * SCREENS SAVED IN THEIR CORRECT COLOURS * COMPRESSES SCREEN CODE TO SAVE EVEN MORE DISC SPACE * FASTER LOADING TIMES FROM DISC BECAUSE OF SHORTER FILE LENGTHS

SPEEDTRANS PLUS2 transfers over 200 programs to Disc, some of the latest it will do are MADBALLS, FREDDY HARDEST (both games) BASKET MASTER, MATCHDAY II, PHANTOM CLUB, GRYZOR (main program), SUPER HANG ON.

These latest Speedlock types can be identified by the whole screen flashing with horizontal bands of colour immediately after the first file has loaded. Do remember that **SPEEDTRANS PLUS2** does not save all the memory in the hope of having saved all the game. It saves exactly the right length of code. All screens are saved in compressed form – some as little as 4K (Basket Master) thus saving even more disc space.

SPEEDTRANS PLUS2 is the most sophisticated Tape to Disc transfer utility for SPEEDLOCK protected programs ever published. It will certainly transfer more games than any other Speedlock transfer program on the market and with much greater ease. Other transfer programs require you to know how long the game code is so that you may run an alternative program for the long games which does not save the loading screen. This is done because they do not make use of the extra memory available on the CPC 6128 or from the use of an extra RAMPACK (DK'Tronics 64K or greater.) This program is highly intelligent in that it first reads the loader from the tape and establishes which type of protection is in use from 6 alternatives. At the end of the load it then finds out how long the code is and if it is too long to be saved to one file it will move the excess code into the banked memory and save the game in two parts and write the appropriate loader program. The screen will also be moved into a bank and compressed before saving. This can mean screen files as small as 4k (Basket Master) depending on mode and content. All this adds up to a lot less disc space being used than with other transfer programs and you will nearly always get the loading screen saved. The exception to this is when there is no loading screen (as in SCRABBLE) or when the screen is blanked out and more code is loaded into the screen memory, as in BMX SIMULATOR and MADBALLS for example. Try getting a screen with Multiface or any other imager. These imagers are only capable of saving what you have in memory at the time the button is pressed. What happens in multi part games? you have to press the button for each part thus wasting precious disc space. They also save far too much code and therefore waste even more space and saving too much code means longer loading times from disc. Programmers are now checking to see if you have an imager plugged in an if you have the program will not load. Imagers also have to be in place before you can reload your program and saved programs can only be reloaded in to the machine in which they are saved. **SPEEDTRANS PLUS2** creates totally stand alone files and if you have nother CPC even without extra memory they wil run prefectly. It also displays the saving name on screen at the start of the load with all except the very latest games. In all cases the disc saving name is displayed while the save is carried out. To run the transferred game just RUN this name. Another intelligent feature of **SPEEDTRANS2** is that the very first thing it does is to find out which drive it is in. This means that if you have a two drive system you may run the program from drive B by typing RUN"B:DISC" or :B RUN"DISC. However the saving will ALWAYS be to DRIVE A so with a single drive you must change the disc when promoted on screen.

DISC:- UK £14.99 – EUROPE £16.25 – REST OF WORLD £17.00
Upgrade your SPEEDTRANS PLUS -send your disc together with: **UK £2.00 – EUROPE £3.25 – REST OF WORLD £4.00**
Upgrade your SPEEDTRANS TAPE send your tape together with: **UK £12.00 – EUROPE £13.25 – REST OF WORLD £14.00**

LOW LOW PRICES ARNOR SOFTWARE *LOW LOW PRICES*

Program	UK – Disc	Eprom	Europe – Disc	Eprom	Rest of World – Disc	Eprom
PROTEXT OFFICE *NEW*	27.00	N/A	28.25	N/A	29.00	N/A
PROTEXT FILER *NEW*	19.00	N/A	20.25	N/A	21.00	N/A
PROTEXT	20.00	30.00	21.25	31.25	22.00	32.00
PROSPELL	19.00	27.00	20.25	28.25	21.00	29.00
PROMERGE (ROM=PROMERGE PLUS)	19.00	27.00	20.25	28.25	21.00	29.00
MAXAM *THE BEST!*	20.00	31.00	21.25	32.25	22.00	33.00
MAXAM 1 1/2 *NEW*	N/A	23.00	N/A	24.25	N/A	25.00
UTOPIA	N/A	23.00	N/A	24.25	N/A	25.00

ROMBO ROMBOARD UK – £28.00 EUROPE – £30.00 REST OF THE WORLD – £31.00

DMP 2000/2160/3000/3160

The printer buffer presently in the DMP 200/3000 series is a 2K RAM. Most of this RAM is used by the printer's operating system leaving an average 1/2K as buffer space. Our upgrade kit contains a new static RAM chip which will increase the printer buffer by 6K (about 4 pages of text). This upgrade allows all Download Characters to be re-defined allowing the user to design special characters for use with scientific and other programs. The kit is supplied with full pictorial instructions to allow the amateur to carry out his own modification (the DMP2160 takes about 7 minutes). If you don't think you are up to it your local TV shop can do the job in approximately 15 minutes

UK £12.50 – EUROPE £13.75 – R. of W. £14.50

FIRETRANS

This utility will transfer a number of FIREBIRD programs from tape to disc automatically including most opening screens in full colour. FIRETRANS will work equally well from tape but will be more convenient to use if converted to disc with SAMSON/Transmat. It will transfer WILLOW PATTERN, RUNESTONE, CHIMERA, GUNSTAR, PARABOLA, REALM, SPIKY HAROLD, BOOTY, DON'T PANIC, GUNFRIGHT, STARGLIDER, NINJA MASTER, HELICOPTER, and some version of THRUST, HARVEY HEADBANGER and BOMBSCARE.

TAPE:- UK £5.00 – EUROPE £6.25 R. of W. £7.00
DISC:- UK £8.50 – EUROPE £9.75 – R. of W. £10.50

NEW COMPACTOR NEW

COMPACTOR will allow you to load a standard 17K screen, set the mode, border and ink colours and then save it as a compressed screen contianing its own mode and ink colour information. Most screens compact down to an average of 9K which is an enormous saving on disc space. Loading time of compressed screens is also proportionately reduced.

TAPE:- UK £5.00 – EUROPE £6.25 R. of W. £7.00
DISC:- UK £8.50 – EUROPE £9.75 – R. of W. £10.50

TRANSIT

TRANSIT is a disc-to-disc file copier which handles file upto 40K in length in one pass. It will copy from drives A-A, A-B, B-B and B-A making an ideal utility for use with 5 1/4" second drive.

TAPE:- UK £4.50 – EUROPE £5.25 – R. of W. £6.50
DISC:- UK £8.00 – EUROPE £9.25 – R. of W. £10.00

UTILITY DISC No. 1

This utility disc contains 5 programs, all menu driven. They are SAMSON, TRANSIT, QCLONE, VIEWTEXT and the fast disc FORMATTER.

DISC:- UK £15.50 – EUROPE £16.75 – R. of W. £17.50
ROM:- UK £17.25 – EUROPE £18.50 – R. of W. £19.25

ADVANCED MUSIC SYSTEM

When you buy Rainbird's Advanced Music System from us we will give you

ABSOLUTELY FREE OF CHARGE

A disk containing THE GOLDMARK COLLECTION of virtuoso demonstration music files by Rob Baxter some of which have been written especially for us.

UK £26.00 – EUROPE £27.25 R.of W. £28.00

NEW NIRVANA NEW

Have you tried backing up your original expensive disc software and failed? Use NIRVANA before its too late! NIRVANA (meaning enlightenment) is an extremely powerful disc handling utility which has the following features: Disc to disc back-up copier which will handle most of the commercially protected discs available today. File copier for individual files. Disc formatter, much easier to use than CPM. Change file attributes. Erase files. Change filenames. Will handle all disc drive combinations.

DISC:- UK £14.99 – EUROPE £16.25 – R. of W. £17.00

NEW SHAREPLAY NEW

THE STOCK MARKET SIMULATION
(All CPC's)

This is a serious educational program for 1 to 6 players and provides all the enjoyment of playing the stockmarket without any risk of personal bankruptcy!! Each player can buy and sell shares and the target is the first to reach £1,000,000. The program includes a stockholding portfolio listing the shares purchased, their number, cost and market value. Bank balances are also shown. Graphical representation of market fluctuations are given in the form of a bar graph. Also included is a high score table. Scores are automatically saved at the end of each session.

DISC:- UK £12.00 – EUROPE £13.25 – R. of W. £14.00

NEW WORDSEEK NEW

THE WORDSEARCH PROGRAM
(All CPC's)

This educational program will tax even the most agile mind. The aim is to find the hidden words in a 15 by 15 puzzle within a set time limit of 30 seconds. The time limit is extended for every correct letter of the current word found. You may create your own puzzle consisting of up to 10 words which can be saved to disc and used at any time. You may only retain one puzzle at a time but if you choose not to use your own puzzle then the program will randomly select one form the library of 50 on the disc. All of the puzzles in the library are made up of 10 words each consisting of 1x8 letter, 1x7 letter, 2x6 letter, 3x5 letter, 2x4 letter and 1x3 letter words. This ensures equal difficulty regardless which one is randomly loaded. The program contains a print option (for Epson compatible printers) allowing a hard copy to be made of any puzzle created. Keyboard/Joystick options are also available.

DISC ONLY – U.K. £12.00 – EUROPE £13.25
REST OF THE WORLD £14.00

NEW TUNESMITH NEW

TUNESMITH is a simple to use sound utility which allows you to use the keyboard to play and record your tunes. No knowledge of music or Amstrad sound commands is required all you need to be able to do is whistle the tune you play or record. The octave and period of notes is variable and the program includes synthesizer and vibrato effects. **TUNESMITH** will save any tune as a basic file which can be RUN, CHAINED or MERGED into your own program

DISC:- UK £12.00 – EUROPE £13.25 R. of W. £14.00

SAMSON

SAMSON has been developed by us to transfer not only the normal programs but also many of todays where the code is much longer. **SAMSON** differs in many ways from other Tape-to Disc utilities, the main differences being: * SAMSON retains original file suffixes (SAMSON.SCN will be saved as SAMSON.SCN) * Improved file relocation method * Elaborate Tape read/Disc write system which reduces Tape Motor, Slave Replay and Disc Drive Motor wear substantially. * A large reduction in tape transfer time is also achieved in all but a few cases * NEW "SPLIT" option for todays longer games (we will be using this option in future routines) * All file information is displayed on screen and can be echoed to your printer if needed. SAMSON also transfer itself to disc.

TAPE:- UK £7.50 – EUROPE £8.75 – R. of W. £9.50
DISC:- UK £11.50 – EUROPE £12.75 – R. of W. £13.50

CHARACTER DESIGNER

(All CPC's)

- **REDEFINE YOUR PRINTER DOWNLOAD CHARACTERS**
- **REDEFINE THE COMPUTER SCREEN FONT**
- **REDEFINE ANY/ALL KEYBOARD KEYS (ASWERTY)**
- **DESIGN SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC CHARACTERS/FONTS**

Takes all the hard work out of character designing making it a pleasure. The printer part of the program will only work if your printer is capable of DOWNLOADING and is EPSON compatible – see your printer manual. Works with 7-bit or 8-bit output (8-bit port). All the designing is done "On Screen" so you can see exactly what you are doing. You can save your newly designed characters to disc and reload them at any time into a basic program and into most Word-Processors. The program also allows the user to redefine any or all of the keys on the keyboard. This feature will be useful for those who require an ASWERTY keyboard. The disc also contins twelve sample fonts for experimentation

TAPE:- UK £7.99 EUROPE £9.25 – R. of W. £10.00
DISC:- UK £11.99 – EUROPE £13.25 – R. of W. £14.00

FAST FORMATTER

The FASTFORMATTER will format one side of a disc in approx. 30 seconds with the choice of DATA, VENDOR or SYSTEM and its much easier then using your CPM disc.

TAPE:- UK £4.50 – EUROPE £5.25 – R.of W. £6.50
DISC:- UK £8.00 – EUROPE £9.25 – R.of W. £10.00

Please send your cheque (£ Sterling) Eurocheque OR UK P.O. to
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Please write or telephone 07072 71529 for full brochure.

TYPHOON

Imagine ● £8.95 cass, £14.95 disk joystick/keys

Hordes of mechanical invaders threaten to dominate the Earth (oh no not again) and so must be blasted out of existence. You pilot both a helicopter gunship and an F-14 jet plane on a seek and destroy mission behind enemy lines.

SECOND OPINION

"One of those games that starts really badly, and then gets a little bit better before sliding off the bottom of the scale again. Treat with suspicion, unless you're a jet/helicopter gunship freak." SC

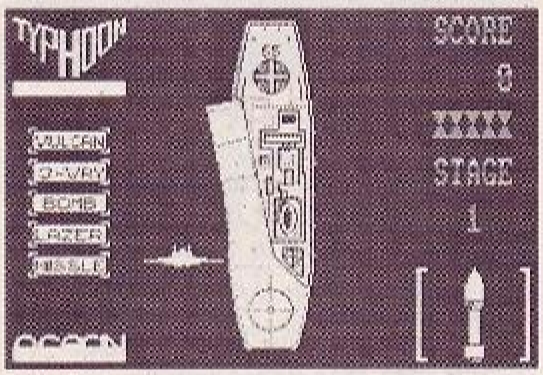
GREEN SCREEN:
Lousy choice of colours

Down one side of the screen is a column of five icons: vulcan, 3-way, bomb, lazer and missile. Down the other is a score and lives panel with a smart bomb sitting down at the bottom of the screen. In the centre of the screen is the playing area which either comes out towards you or scrolls down the screen.

The first stage of the game shows your plane diving vertically through the clouds and shooting down enemy aircraft. Eventually it reaches an aircraft carrier and then hovers vertically over it as you try to sink the ship. (Pretty smart plane huh?) Level two is reminiscent of *Flying Shark* or *Xevious* – a vertically scrolling level with both ground and air targets to blast and avoid. That's about it as far as gameplay goes: shoot, bomb, die.

On level one you get a terrible impression of moving towards the ground, the clouds leap up at you in big steps, but slow ones and colour is very scarce on all levels. Sound effects are tacky, but you do at least get a decent tune on the title screen and in between stages.

Soar through wave after wave of flying death in your armour-laden helicopter, scream through the skies in your F-14 as you take on seemingly limitless hordes of mechanoid invaders. At least that's what the instructions say you do in this Konami coin-op conversion. Instructions like that should always be taken with a pinch of salt, but the ones with *Typhoon* should come complete with a share in a salt mine. Have a good look before you even consider investing your hard-earned cash. GBH



▲ Typhoon? More a storm in a thimble

FIRST DAY TARGET:
Score 50,000 points

The Verdict

GRAPHICS 48%
- ■ Lacking in colour.
- ■ Little sense of movement in plane stages.

SONICS 51%
- □ Good tunes.

GRAB FACTOR 46%
- ■ First stage is ultra-tedious.
- □ After that it gets better.

STAYING POWER 53%
- □ Eight levels to go through.
- ■ Not that difficult to complete them though.

AA RATING 51%

□ Typhoon? More of a storm in a thimble.

OPERATION HORMUZ

Again Again ● £9.99 cass, disk joystick/keys

Durrell Software (of *Harrier Attack* – AA1, 53% – fame) have come with another game of naval conflict, only this time they're just the programming house. The setting is the Arabian Gulf and you have control of a McDonald (no relation to Pat) Douglas (no relation to Adams) VTOL ground attack jet. Your mission is to destroy seven enemy missile bases in the surrounding area.

A large sprite of your jet sits in the middle of the four way scrolling playing area and a panel across the bottom of the screen showing the status of your aircraft and your score. Aircraft status is broken down into fuel, weapons and damage sustained.

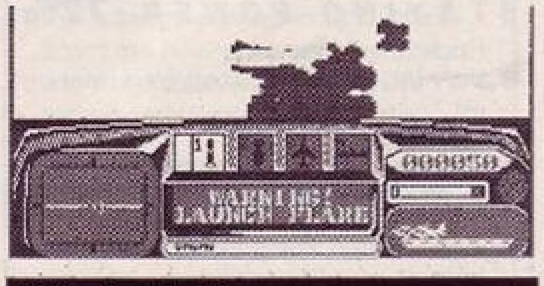
Your have four weapon types on-board: cannons, bombs, air-to-air missiles and anti-ship missiles. Bombs and cannons are in the greatest supply with a single anti-ship missile and a handful of air-to-air missiles. All damage is repaired and fuel and weapons systems are reset to maximum when you land on your own carrier. If the carrier sinks, however, things will start to go very badly for you. You have three jets to complete the mission with and bonus ones can be gained.

Exocet missiles are being fired at the carrier and so you have to periodically return to the ship so that you shoot down the missiles. MIG 21 fighters are also in the area and they have to be dealt with in a typically violent manner: *blast-'em!* Ground based targets also fire at you and launch missiles at your carrier.

Sound is unimpressive, with just a handful of explosions and an irritating noise coming from your engine. There's a good tune on the title screen, though.

The scrolling is fast and smooth. You can do some pretty impressive manoeuvres with the plane and the explosions are crude but effective.

Operation Hormuz cannot seriously be described as ultra-sophisticated, but it does its job as a shoot-em-up very well. Destroying the seven bases is fairly irrelevant, and you'll get your kicks just flying around killing things instead. Not a classic, but a solid, playable game. GBH



● Blow 'em to hell!

SECOND OPINION

"A not-half-bad shoot-'em-up that will occupy you for quite some time before your attention wanders." SC

THE SCREEN IN GREEN:
no problems

The Verdict

GRAPHICS 64%
- □ Fast and smooth scrolling.
- ■ Plenty of colour.

SONICS 54%
- □ Nice title tune.
- ■ Ticks and booms, but they suffice.

GRAB FACTOR 73%
- ■ Plane's tricky to control at first...
- □ But you'll soon be flying!

STAYING POWER 64%
- □ Seven bases to destroy.
- ■ Just a simple shoot-em-up.

AA RATING 70%

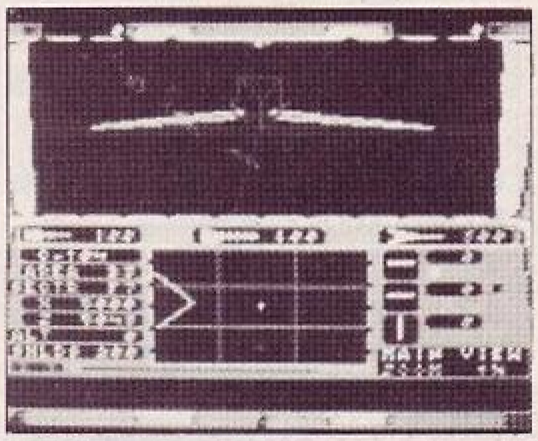
□ Ideal for gratuitous blasting.

FIRST DAY TARGET:
Score 10,000

ECHELON

US Gold ● £12.99 cass, £14.99 disk
joystick/keys

For many years astronomers had been looking for the tenth planet. In 1996 it was found. It was named Isis after the Egyptian goddess of the moon and exploration craft were sent out to study it. Isis turned out to be a rather unusual planet, since it appeared at one stage to have housed an advanced civilization. Now however it's just a cold rock sitting 6.5 billion kilometers from the sun.



● view of your C-104 from the RPV...

The only logical explanation is that it had been captured by the sun's gravity when it passed by the solar system.

In 2054 a prison colony was set up on Isis and the inmates forced to work in mines. 32 years after its opening there was a major prison break with 350 prisonners escaping. The prison was closed and in the following year pirates began raiding ISF (International Space Federation) Facilities (the ISF being a United Nations run organisation).



Eventually things got a little out of hand and Echelon was set up on Isis – which appeared to be a centre of pirate activities. You're a pilot of the C-104 Tomahawk combat/exploration craft and have been posted on Isis as part of Echelon. Your mission is to find and destroy the pirate base.

The playing area is made up of 36 areas which are further sub-divided into 196 sectors, giving a total of 7056 sectors to explore. Somewhere among them is the pirate base. Nine areas are mapped out for you on the patrol zone map supplied with the game, with the other 25 to be filled in by you as your exploration continues. There are several difficulty levels which range from simple scientific explorations through patrol to military. More and more enemy craft are encountered on the patrol and military levels.

Isis is viewed in 3D through any of the six cameras positioned around your C-104. A grid is overlayed on the map to give you some idea of how far away something is and how fast you're going. If you switch it off, however, things move a little faster.

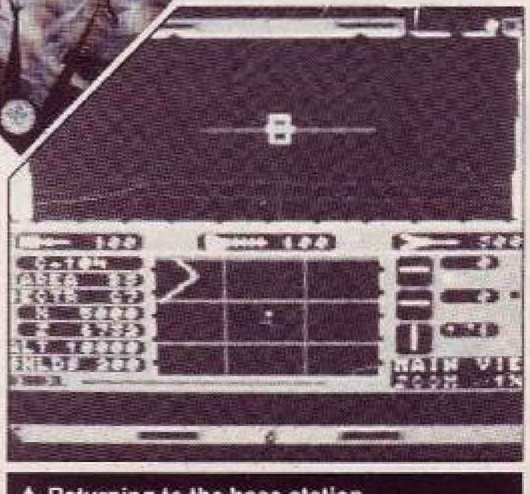
SECOND OPINION

"Call me old-fashioned (you're old-fashioned – Gary), but I really don't like a game that threatens to crash when I try to save it. It just made me nervous.

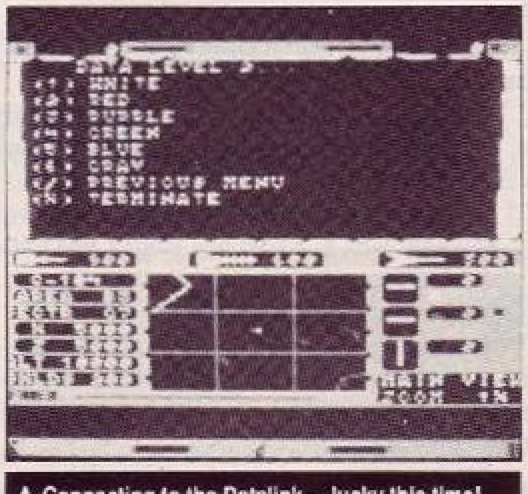
"On the other hand, if you get into this game you're going to be hooked for months. It's massive!" SC

THE SCREEN IN GREEN:
Text easier to read, but some vector graphics indistinguishable

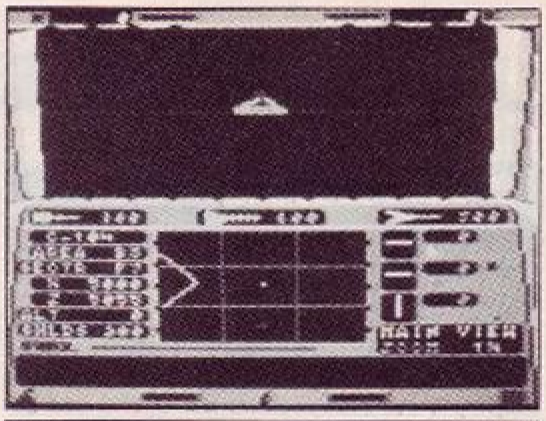
There are a multitude of controls – 33 in all. These control the ship, launch remote controlled vehicles, select and fire weapons and allow communication between you and ISF computers. This latter 'datalink' is the cause of the most serious objection to this game. Pressing ESC is supposed to present you with four options: docking; game options; pirate maps; and terminate. In practice it frequently caused our copy of the game to crash.



▲ Returning to the base station



▲ Connecting to the Datalink – lucky this time!



▲ And a view of the RPV from the C-104

You can play *Echelon* as an arcade or as a strategy game. As far as the arcade action goes it's all slow paced and looks dated. The strategy style of game should take a very long time to complete with such a huge playing area. The problems and puzzles that you'll have to solve require some lateral thinking, but at least your brain gets a bit of exercise instead of just your fingers.

Graphically it's fairly boring with simple vector graphics to represent everything. Text on the datalink screens seemed to be easier to read in mono than colour, but you should be able to work things out after a couple of squints. Sound effects are almost non-existent, just the firing of your weapons.

Echelon reminds me in some ways of *Elite* with its long term objectives and vector graphics. It also bears some resemblence to *Driller* with its problem solving aspects, but truth be told it's not as good as either. The major problem though is the datalink bug which is likely to put many people off – and rightly so. GBH

FIRST DAY TARGET:
Crack half of the pirate cipher

The Verdict

GRAPHICS 61%
- □ Well designed control panel.
- ■ Slow moving vectors and poor colour choice.

SONICS 19%
- ■ Feeble effects.

GRAB FACTOR 64%
- □ Simple to control, after a while anyway.
- ■ Program sometimes crashes in the datalink.

STAYING POWER ... 72%
- □ Huge area to explore.
- ■ Very little action to keep your interest.

AA RATING 67%

- ■ A good effort spoilt by a disastrous bug.

ARCHON COLLECTION

Electronic Arts ● £8.95 cass, £14.95 disk joystick/keys

Question: take chess, throw in a mixed assortment of monsters and magic, add a few arcade-style elements and what do you get? Answer: *Archon*. It's a battle between the forces of good and evil with no sophisticated plot: beat your opponent. For your money you get not only *Archon*, but get *Archon II-Adept*.

The game is played on a nine by nine board of squares which are in several flavours, the most useful being the power

The Verdict

GRAPHICS 64%
- ☐ Colourful graphics.
- ■ Animation leaves a little to be desired.

SONICS 31%
- ☐ Just a handful of effects.

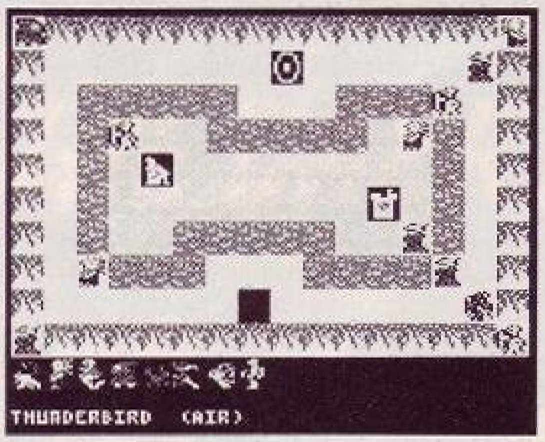
GRAB FACTOR.........67%
- ☐ wo games for the price of one
- ☐ Simple to play.

STAYING POWER...75%
- ☐ Two player game plus difficulty levels.
- ■ Computer opponents will eventually be no challenge.

AA RATING 71%
- ☐ Not quite up to EA standards, but a very good game nonetheless.

points. There are five power points and to win the game you have to either control all five of them or blast your opponent off the board.

You can play either good or evil and there's also an option to play against the computer. Both sides are made up of eight different types of pieces which make up a total of 18 pieces on each side in all. Good consists of nine knights and two each of phoenix, djinni, valkries, golems, archers and unicorns. The evil forces are made up of nine goblins and two each from among



▲ *Archon II-Adept*

basilisk, manticore, troll, shapeshifter, dragon and banshee. The good and evil forces are both led by a spell caster: the wizard and sorceress respectively.

As well as having an army of pieces to hack away at your opponent with you also have seven spells at your disposal: teleport, heal, shift time, exchange, summon elemental, revive and imprison.

Archon II is very similar to *Archon* in set-up, the main difference being that you have four Adepts to conjure creatures associated with the four elements and the objective this time is to capture your opponent's citadel. Combat is resolved in exactly the same way as in *Archon* and there are also some spells that can be used to aid you or hinder your opponent.

The graphics are bright and colourful, but it would have been nice to have more animation. Sound is rather limited, but it is a strategy game after all.

Not quite up to the standards of recent EA games, but still worth a look nonetheless. Several difficulty levels help to extend the life and being able to play against a human is always a worthwhile addition to a game. GBH

FIRST DAY TARGET:
Beat the computer on beginner level

Spelling it out

*With a **Teleport** you can rapidly move one piece to any other square on the board.*

*If one of your pieces is wounded the damage can be repaired with a **Heal** spell.*

*Time can be reversed or accelerated with the **Shift Time** spell.*

*With **Exchange** any two icons on the board can have positions swapped.*

*Four types of elemental can be summoned with **Summon Elemental**: earth, fire, air and water. Elementals fight for you for one combat.*

*Dead pieces can be brought back to life with the aid of **Revive**.*

*Finally **imprison** temporarily immobilises an enemy piece.*

In the light corner...

The **Wizard** is the only member of the good forces who is capable of casting spells and so must be protected at all costs.

Unicorns charge around quickly and fire bolts of energy from their horns.

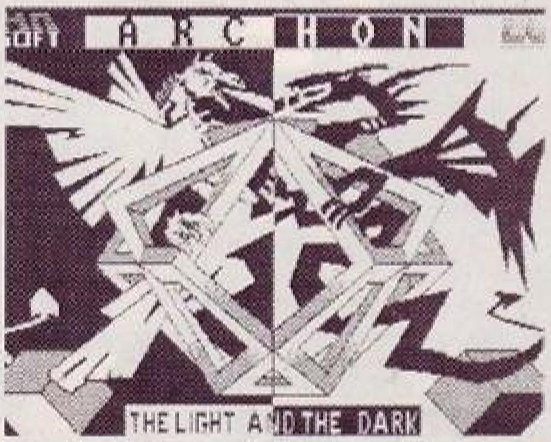
Boulders can be hurled by **Golems** who take some killing.

Valkyries fly through the air wielding a magical spear.

The **Djinni** is a tough air spirit that can create a tornado.

Standing close to a **Phoenix** can be dangerous: they explode into a ball flame and while they do so they're invulnerable to attack.

They may be lousy combatants, but you do have nine knights to vanquish your foes with.



▲ Light and dark in the *Archon Collection*

And in the dark corner...

The **Sorceress** is just as deadly as the **Wizard**.

Gaze into the eyes of the **Basilisk** and it could be last thing you see.

Don't stand near the **Manticore's** tail or you could end up with more perforations than a Tetley teabag.

Trolls may not be very intelligent, but they have a distinct talent for picking up and throwing things. They were always bottom of the class, but no-one ever laughed at them for it, unless they wanted to be picked up and thrown a bit.

The **Shapeshifter** is a sneaky one, which becomes an exact duplicate of its foe.

Everyone knows to keep well away the fiercesome firebreathing **Dragon**.

The wail of the **Banshee** drains the life-force from anyone too close to her. Like Tiffany only worse.

They may only be armed with clubs, but **Goblins** can be a match for the **Knights**.

SECOND OPINION

"Not EA's strongest ever game, but even so it has a fascinating quality that makes you keep returning to it. And with the various levels it stays just difficult enough to challenge you to continue.

"Not bad at all." SC

THE SCREEN IN GREEN:
No problems

GALACTIC CONQUEROR

Titus ● £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk joystick/keys

Gallion is an organisation dedicated to the protection of mankind. It's situated in a remote corner of the galaxy from where it scans for hostile invaders. Alien invaders have been detected and so you've been sent to intercept in the space craft *Thunder Cloud II.* Good luck, and don't forget to wrap up warm and ring your mum at weekends.

There are basically two screens to the game: a galactic map and the shoot-'em-up section. With the map you have a crosshair that's moved under joystick control and pressing fire sends you to the planet under the crosshair. The shoot-'em-up section is viewed from the rear of the ship with aliens coming towards you in 3D. Across the bottom of the screen is your score and there's also an indicator for your shields.



▲ Blasting away again

In the main part of the game you just fly around blasting everything in sight or at least getting out of its way. The action takes place in three places: low, high and space. At low altitude your ship stays upright and tilts left or right, depending on how you move it. With the high altitude and space sequences you can roll your ship, but the screen turns rather than your ship.

The graphics are fast and colourful, although there's little animation. Sound effects are good even if they are limited to firing sounds and explosions.

This would make a great little budget game, but at full price it's wide open to the criticism that it's just another 3D shoot-em-up with pretty graphics. Titus seem to be able to produce games with good graphics, but perhaps have more trouble with gameplay. GBH

FIRST DAY TARGET:
score 250,000

SECOND OPINION

"I did enjoy this, and nothing Gary says is going to change my mind. Still, he's right about the gameplay, and the suspicion is definitely there that this one won't run and run." SC

THE SCREEN IN GREEN: *Loses the prettiness, but OK to play*

The Verdict

GRAPHICS 87%
- □ Fast moving and colourful.
- ■ Galactic map could be clearer.

SONICS 31%
- □ Effects are done well – there just aren't enough of them.

GRAB FACTOR 73%
- □ Plenty to blast.
- □ Some tactical thought needed to win.

STAYING POWER 68%
- □ Big galaxy with plenty of things to kill...
- ■ But that's all that you do.

AA RATING 73%
- □ Not a bad game at all.

DEATH STALKER

Codemasters ● £2.99 cass joystick/keys

Codemasters' latest venture into the world of budget software is a game of exploration and hacking in a world filled with monsters and people stupid enough to fight them. You'll notice at once, because you're very observant like that, the increase in their prices. £3 is likely to become the standard budget price for a number of houses before too long, and what you'll be wanting to know, because you're inquisitive like that, is whether what you get is half as good again as the 'old' £2 games. Read on and find out!

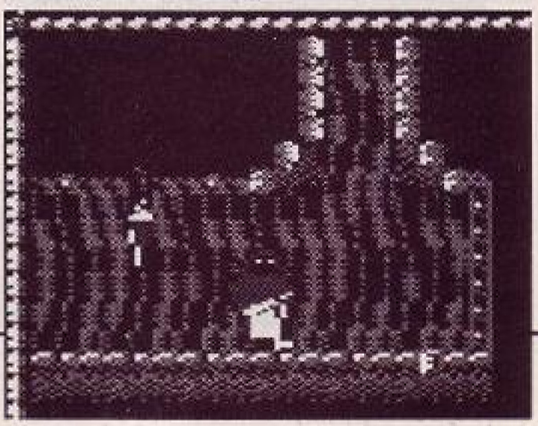
The screen shows your location and any objects, monsters and exits and a column of skulls to the right of the screen gives an indication of your state of health. Your score is also shown and objects carried appear up the left hand side of the screen. When desired a menu can be called up across the bottom of the screen.

One thing that does make this game slightly different is line of sight. You can only see into areas where a normal human could see – there's definitely no looking around corners from 40 feet away with this game. (The only other game that I can think of that used a similar system is *Ranarama* by Hewson. *Ranarama* used an overhead view and you could only see into rooms once you'd entered them: *Death Stalker* has a side view instead. It is nice to have this sort of feature in a game though, it gives it a little more realism.)

Throughout the game an atmospheric tune plays, but you can ditch it if you want to. The graphics are small, but there's plenty of colour and they're well animated.

There's plenty to do and lots of places to explore which means that Codemasters are going to make loads of money out of this one over the next few months. The strangest thing about it is that it's not called *Death Stalker Simulator!* GBH

▼ Stalking death in *Death Stalker*



FIRST DAY TARGET:
1,000 points

SECOND OPINION

"If we don't like something here you'll know about it. And when we say we like something, you know you can rely on it being good. Like Death Stalker. *At £3 it's well worth buying, and you'll enjoy it. Promise."* SC

GREEN SCREEN: *Dull but visible*

The Verdict

GRAPHICS 70%
- □ Lots of colour and well animated.
- ■ Small characters though.

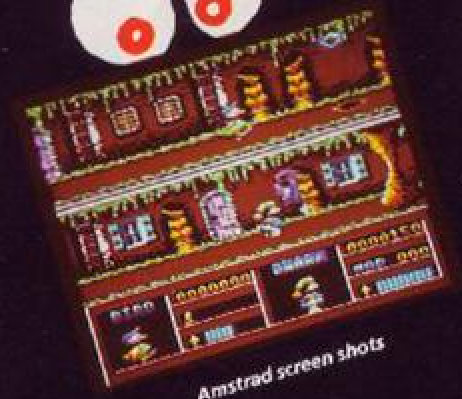
SONICS 65%
- □ Atmospheric tune.

GRAB FACTOR 74%
- □ Enough hack and exploration to keep you entertained.
- ■ Frustrating for a few games while you work out what's going on.

STAYING POWER 74%
- □ Large playing area to discover.
- □ Puzzles and problems to overcome.

AA RATING 72%
- □ Excellent budget value.

DON'T GET LEFT IN THE DARK...



Amstrad screen shots



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R-TYPE

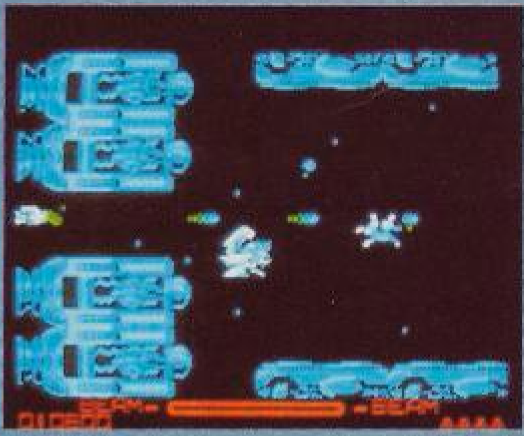
Electric Dreams ● £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk joystick/keys

In its long and unhappy history, the Bydo Empire has never ever won an award for niceness. Not once. Zilch. It is evil, horrific and deadly. Not altogether surprisingly, war has been waged by them on the planet Earth. The battle has raged for some time, and now Earth is fighting back – with your help as pilot of the R-9 fighter plane. All you have to do is grind the star hopping monsters to pulp (blow-'em away) using every dirty trick in the book or not in it, and every weapon you can get your grubby hands on. Save the Earth or die trying.

There are many levels to play through, each one being loaded in separately from tape or disk as the previous one is completed. Each level scrolls horizontally from the right, and the Bydo hordes attack from all sides.

Below the playing area is a score and lives panel, along with a beam indicator. The intensity of the beam fired from your ship depends on how long you keep the fire button depressed (talk to it about the meaning of life and the futility of it all, that should do the trick). A long press gets you a very powerful beam, but you can't fire as often.

Your ship initially only has the beam weapon, but extra ones can be collected by shooting certain alien types and then flying over their deposits (jewels). Three types of laser, homing missiles, extra speed and shield orbs can be added. When the first jewel is collected you also get a special weapon called 'the force' which can be fitted to the front or rear of the ship. It can also be left flying around



▲ Flying through a narrow gap

to act as advance or rear guard.

When it's fitted to your ship it stops all bullets from the front or rear, depending of course on where it's attached. Reflection lasers bounce all over the screen destroying everything that they touch. Anti-aircraft lasers and ground lasers fire up or down respectively. Homing missiles are fired in pairs go for a suitable target on screen. Extra speed fairly obviously makes you move faster and shield orbs drift alongside your ship destroying whatever they hit.

At certain sections of a level you'll encounter some very big and nasty aliens, and you'll need all of your arsenal of weaponry to stand any chance of survival. The first biggie is a caterpillar-like creature going around in circles. Its outer surface is invulnerable and the only way to get at it is by going into the centre of the circle.

Unfortunately it's armed on the inside and if you don't take care you'll end up dead instead of it. The end of level one is guarded by the fearsome alien on the cover of the box.

This guy takes some killing and if you lose a life all special weaponry is lost. When (or if) you get past him you'll go onto the second level and things start getting even tougher.

First the good news on the graphics front: the scrolling is smooth and fastish. The bad news, however, is that there's very little colour and the sprites aren't exactly what you'd call overly detailed. Sound effects are limited to a handful of explosions and they're nothing to write home about.

R-Type has all of the features of the arcade game except for the graphics, speed and sound. It's a dull, slow game with poor sound effects. Not a good example of an arcade conversion. **GBH**

FIRST DAY TARGET:
Score 100,000

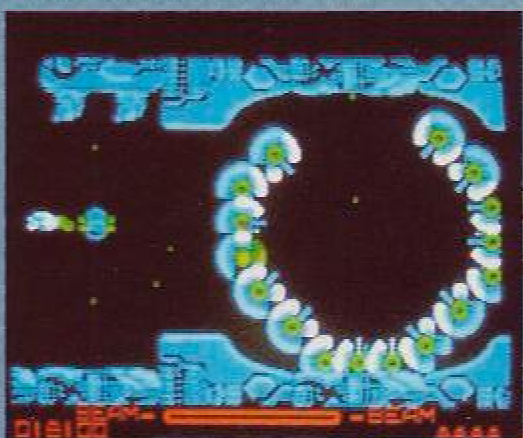
SECOND OPINION

"I don't reckon this is as poor as Gary makes out – but then I was never as addicted to the original R-Type arcade experience as he was! The fact is that people do buy conversions, and this one will be no exception. Just hope they're not too disappointed." **SC**

GREEN SCREEN:
No more exciting



▲ Collecting jewels adds even more to your firepower



▲ Caterpillars are tough to kill



The Verdict

GRAPHICS ... 48%
□ Good scrolling.
■ Lacking in colour and detail.

SONICS ... 29%
□ Futile effects.

GRAB FACTOR ... 62%
□ Plenty of strap on weapons.
■ Slow paced.

STAYING POWER 54%
□ End of level guardians make progress tough.
■ Tedious maximus.

AA RATING 57%

■ Another disappointing arcade conversion.

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ACCESSORIES

Castle Computers new catalogue listing hundreds of games from 50p upwards, issue 1 now available. Only £1 if ordered with any software, or £1.50 if only the catalogue is required

Castle Computers wishes all its customers a Happy Christmas and Prosperous New Year

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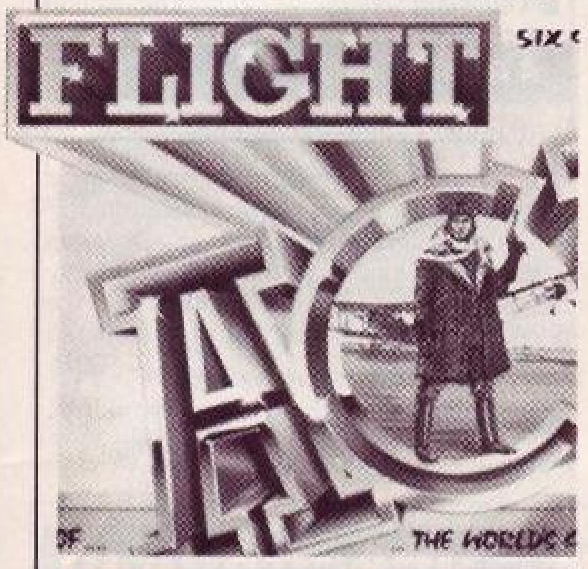
THE BIG BOX PAGE

Compilations ripped open – and in some cases apart – by Gary Barrett

FLIGHT ACE

Gremlin ● £14.99 cass, £17.99 disk joystick/keys

Six flying Gremlin efforts: *Air Traffic Control* (*AA* 1, 68%), *Ace* (*AA* 18, 54%), *Spitfire 40* (*AA* 5, 68%), *Strikeforce Harrier* (*AA* 7, 91%), *Tomahawk* (*AA* 8, 92%) and *Advanced Tactical Fighter* (*AA* 31, 94%). All are simulators, though *ATF* does have some arcade style action in it. Combat comes into all of them, except *Air Traffic Control*, which is all about running an airport (neat idea guys). This lot should keep the simulationist happy and everyone else should get enjoyment out of some of these games at least.



▲ Up, up and away with *Flight Ace*

AA RATING 78%

☐ Ideal – for sims freaks especially.

SPACE ACE

Gremlin ● £14.99 cass, £17.99 disk joystick/keys

Gremlin have two compilations out this month, both part of the Ace series which started with *Karate Ace*. There seven games: *Xevious* (*AA* 18, 57%), *Trantor* (*AA*27, 80%), *Exolon* (*AA* 24, 93%), *Zynaps* (*AA* 24, 83%), *North Star* (*AA* 30, 73%), *Cybernoid* (*AA* 32, 91%) and *Venom Strikes Back* (*AA* 33, 91%). As you can see from those ratings you're getting quality for your cash. There's a nice mixture of straight shoot-em-ups and mixed shoot-and-think games, *Exolon* and *Cybernoid* being the best of the bunch, but the rest still put up a good fight.

Well worth getting even if you have half the games already.



▲ *Space Ace*-the final frontier

AA RATING 84%

☐ Excellent value.

GIANTS

US Gold ● £15.99 cass, £19.99 disk joystick/keys

Take four tatty games from 1988, throw in one good one and what do you get? *Midgets* – sorry, *Giants*. All of the games were big sellers so that qualifies them for the title of a giant, but if you base it on quality then you're well advised to avoid this compilation. The only good game here is *Gauntlet II* (*AA* 28, 90%). The others are: *Outrun* (*AA* 30, 37%), *California Games* (*AA* 30, 59%), *720°* (*AA* 28, 69%) and *Rolling Thunder* (*AA* 30, 37%).

If you've already got *Gauntlet II* then don't bother with this.



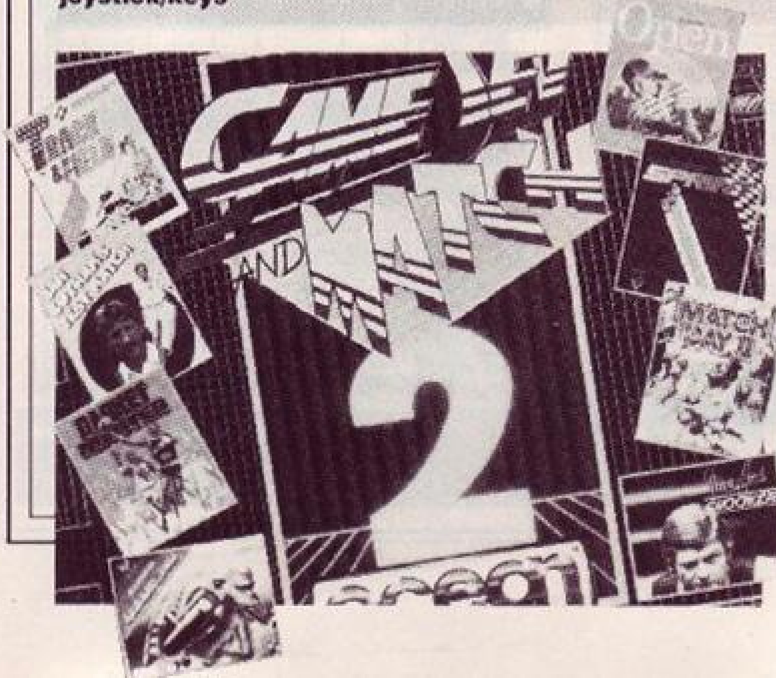
▲ *Giants* – oh no they're not!

AA RATING 38%

☐ Even leprechauns look down on these *Giants*.

GAME, SET AND MATCH II

Ocean ● £12.95 cass, £17.95 disk joystick/keys



Eight sporting games get squeezed into the same box in the second set of sporting games from Ocean. (The first set was called – that's right – *Game, Set and Match*). They are: *Championship Sprint* (*AA* 32, 66%), *Track and Field*, *Steve Davis Snooker* (*AA* 1, 68%), *Super hang On* (*AA* 29, 68%), *Matchday II* (*AA* 28, 86%), *Ian Botham's Test Match*, *Nick Faldo Plays the Open* (*AA* 9, 65%) and *Basket Master* (*AA* 29, 65%).

The most impressive thing about this compilation is the lack of *Leaderboard*. Nearly every compilation to come out with some vague sporting connection has *Leaderboard* on it, and so that makes this rather unusual. Other than that it's a decidedly average compilation.

▲ Sport for all in *Game, Set & Match II*

AA RATING 83%

☐ *Matchday II* is the best of an average bunch

BATMAN – THE CAPED CRUSADER

Ocean ● £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk joystick/keys

Batman and Robin are about to make a comeback in a movie and not surprisingly there's also a computer game. Batman's arch enemies Penguin and The Joker have returned to Gotham City to carry out their devilish plans for world domination or to get even with the cream cake eater... erm, caped crusader and his red breasted friend. This is not the first time that Batman's reared his ugly head (pointy ears) on the CPC: he starred in a game that came out almost three years (*AA* 8, 93%) which went by the extraordinarily original title of *Batman*.

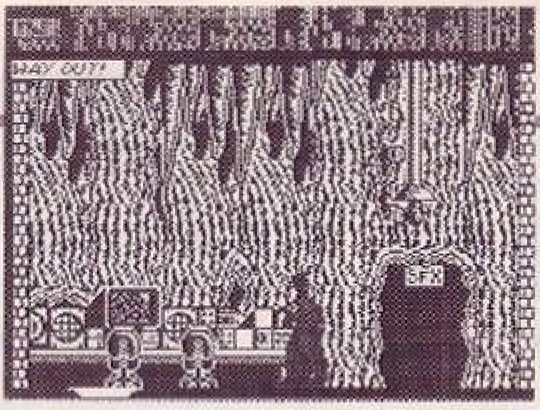
There are two stories for the dynamic mono (Robin has disappeared) to go through: 'A Bird in the Hand' (leaves little messages on your palm) and 'A Fete Worse than Death'. Penguin is the enemy in the former and The Joker in the latter. P-p-p-penguin plans to rule the world with his mechanical chocolate bars salesmen and the Joker has captured Robin and locked him away somewhere in harms way.

Lying around (and under) Gotham City you'll find an assortment of objects that you can collect and use to defeat the hoodlums sent to stop you by the arch villains. You can kick and punch away at the villains or let-'em-'ave-it with your Batarang (like an orangutang only it doesn't say oook).

Through both games you get a batty little tune which can be turned off *(fortunately – ed.)* and there's another tune which sounds vaguely Spiderman-ish on the 'utility' screen. Sound effects are rather simple. The graphics are large, detailed and colourful.

An excellent game that should keep Batman fans and arcade adventurers busy for many hours. Two adventures for the price of one, even if they are very similar in style of play. GBH

FIRST DAY TARGET:
25%



● *Kerpow! Bam!* and all that kind of thing

SECOND OPINION

"Bam! Kerpow! Holy CPC, Batman, this is a cracking good game and no mistake. There's no real reason why a licence has to be good (except, usually, as a licence to print money), but this is. Buy it!" SC

THE SCREEN IN GREEN:
Won't drive you batty

The Verdict

GRAPHICS 84%
□ Nice windows to show the action.
□ Well animated sprites.

SONICS 71%
□ Continuous tunes in both games.
□ – You can turn them off too!

GRAB FACTOR 77%
□ Plenty of object-related puzzles...
■ A map is essential to complete it.

STAYING POWER .. 73%
□ Two games for the price of one.
■ Once you've complete them though....

AA RATING 74%

□ Batman's back in business!

GI HERO

Firebird ● £8.95 cass, £14.95 disk joystick/keys



Some vital NATO peace documents have been stolen. The documents are in a politically sensitive country and they must be retreived quickly. Only a government issue (GI) hero can save the day, and the world for that matter. Unfortunately you only have a trained dog called Killer for company and if things go badly the government will deny all knowledge of your existence. Nice to know you've got back-up isn't it? As you approach the landing zone something goes wrong with the plane and you're forced to jump and get separated from Killer.

The screen consists of a flick screen playing area across the bottom with the rest of the screen being taken up with a status panel. In the panel there are two bars: one represents your health and the other is battery power. A row of magazines sit at the top of the screen (ammunition not *AA*) with a row of bullets below them. Time and score are also shown.

Your first mission is to find Killer and then start worrying about the documents. The jungles are occupied with enemy troops who must be shot. You can shoot them from either a crouched or upright position – in the former their bullets will pass over your head if they're standing.

Rather than just being a straight kill-'em game there's also a little strategy involved, and there's a set of pull down menus to help with this. The menus are needed to change ammunition, decode messages, switch on torches, cut through fences and set or detonate mines.

Graphically it's very similar to *Dark Sceptre* with large sprites ambling around, although there's little colour. Sound effects are negligible.

It suffers from the same problem of *Dark Sceptre* – lack of speed – but not to such a large extent. There's a lot to explore, but can you be bothered? GBH

FIRST DAY TARGET:
250 points

The Verdict

GRAPHICS 61%
□ Large and well animated sprites.
■ Lacking in colour.

SONICS 19%
□ Clickety click.

GRAB FACTOR 64%
□ A mappers game.
■ Just wandering around is boring.

STAYING POWER ... 55%
■ Many locations, all looking the same.
■ Not enough to keep you enthralled.

AA RATING 59%

■ Overpriced.



● Stomping around the jungle

SECOND OPINION

"If you like the sound of the scenario you'll probably enjoy the game, though I have to admit it all sounds a bit dubious to me."
SC

GREEN SCREEN:
Fine

PETER PACK RAT

Silverbird ● £1.99 cass
joystick/keys

A rodent's life is not a happy one, especially if you're a rat. Mice are cute and small, but rats look big and nasty. To owls they also look tasty and insects don't seem that keen on you either. Not all rats are uncouth and messy, however: some are caring, considerate and tidy. You for example.

You live in a little hut which is surrounded by ramps, pipes, wires and ladders. Littered around the area are bottles, cans and the like which make the place very untidy. The idea is to collect the objects to get to the next wave and then do it all over again. Not a sophisticated task, but not an easy one either.

An unusual option at the start of the game is for scrolling or flick screen play. The latter is faster, but the former makes it a little easier to play because you can see your foes more easily: there's no stepping off the edge of the screen and bumping into an enemy.

The graphics are lacking in colour and if you have the scrolling on then the action slows down considerably. An irritating tune plays throughout the game.

A simple concept, *Peter Pack Rat* is really little more than a matter of collecting things and avoiding other things. It should keep new games player happy for a while, but more sophisticated players will find little to keep them occupied in the long term. **GBH**

SECOND OPINION

"How do you feel like being cast as a rat? Though this isn't the most original of games, but at £2 you can't go too far wrong." **SC**

THE SCREEN IN GREEN:
mostly monochrome anyway



▲ Down in the sewers!

The Verdict

GRAPHICS **52%**
- ■ More or less monochrome.
- ■ Slow and jerky scrolling.

SONICS **47%**
- ■ A horrible one. Truly shocking.

GRAB FACTOR **63%**
- ■ Just a matter of collecting things.
- ■ Lose a life and you have to start the wave all over again.

STAYING POWER .. **52%**
- □ Lots of waves to go through.
- ■ All very similar to each other.

AA RATING **58%**
- □ A game for new games players. Old hands steer clear.

FIRST DAY TARGET:
Complete wave three

BLACKBEARD

Kixx ● £2.99 cass
joystick/keys

Whenever pirates get together they have a good old fashioned drinking session and Blackbeard wakes up the morning after he and Redbeard have drunk the town dry of rum. Fearing the worst Blackbeard shoves his hand in his pocket and comes out with a handful of nothing. What he hoped to come out with was a treasure map, but it appears that Redbeard has been through that pocket already. Understandably Blackbeard wants the map back and so he sets off to get it from Redbeard's ship. Guess who's Blackbeard.


▲ My, Redbeard, what a big ship you have. I didn't know aircraft carriers had been invented yet!

At first sight it looks very similar to *Gauntlet*. That's because it is. There are four levels to the ship and each one scrolls in four directions. Pirates are the monsters and there are treasure chests for you to empty of their contents. One of the chests has the treasure map in it, but which one? Chests can only be opened by being shot, but bullets work well on pirates too. You have to save some bullets or you won't be able to complete the game. You also have knives that can be used on pirates as well. Supplies of both can be found around the ship.

The graphics are colourful, but the scrolling is very slow. Animation is poor too. Sound effects are very limited and there are no tunes.

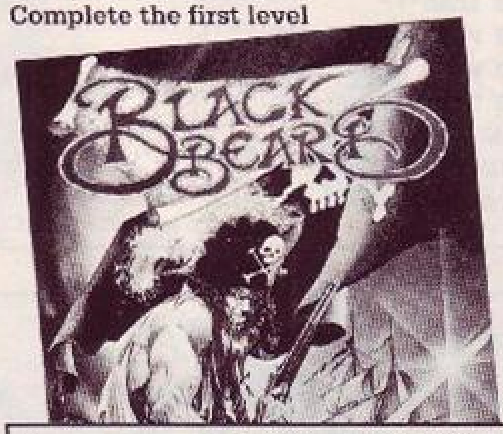
It's slow and it's *boring*. The only thing it has going for is its price, but you can pick up *Gauntlet* on loads of compilations and *Gauntlet* is much better than this. Steer clear. **GBH**

SECOND OPINION

"Gary's last ever review for AA, and how right he is (whaddya mean, makes a change?). Get Gauntlet instead." **SC**

GREEN SCREEN:
Loses colour – all the game had going for it to begin with!

FIRST DAY TARGET:
Complete the first level



The Verdict

GRAPHICS **45%**
- □ Colourful sprites.
- ■ Slow scrolling and poorly animated sprites.

SONICS **11%**
- ■ It goes ping!

GRAB FACTOR **49%**
- ■ Too slow paced.
- ■ Finding something to do is boring.

STAYING POWER ... **42%**
- □ Four large levels to explore.
- ■ Each one is very similar though.

AA RATING **47%**
- ■ If you can find it get *Gauntlet* instead.

CHEAT MODE

GARY BARRETT'S survival kit for CPC games

In this, Gary's last ever session (boo!) there's our usual crop of game-beaters, and the third instalment of our special *Bard's Tale* playing guides

FERNANDEZ MUST DIE!

Imagework's brilliant first game gets the Mike Wong treatment and is hacked for infinite health, lives and ammunition. (Method 1.)

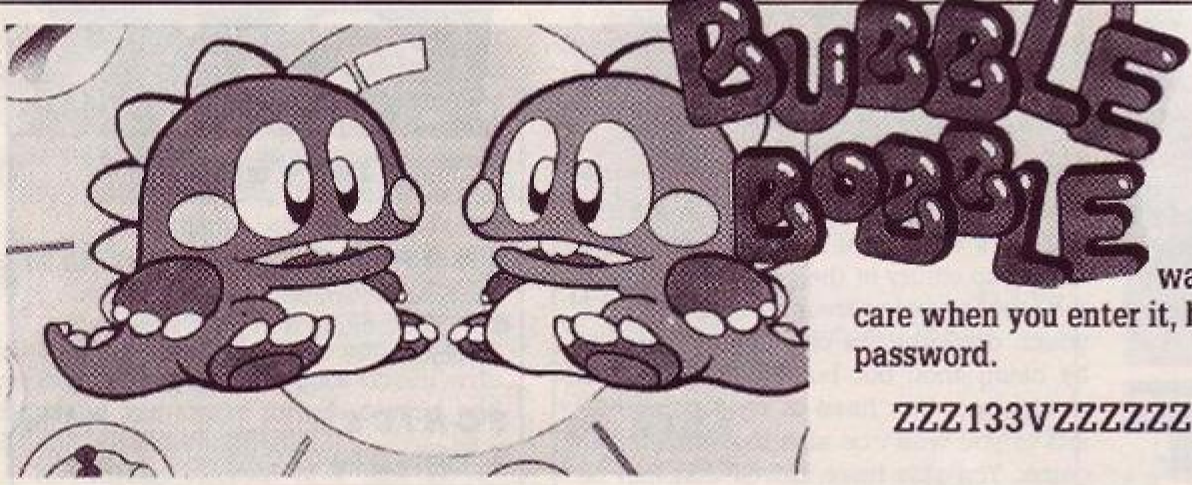
```
1 ' Fernandez-tape
2 ' by Mike Wong
3 ' Amstrad Action Feb 89
1Ø MEMORY &3FFF:MODE 1
2Ø FOR n=&BEØØ TO &BE19
3Ø READ a$
4Ø a=VAL("&"+a$)
5Ø POKE n,a:NEXT
6Ø LOAD"!"
7Ø POKE &417F,&8F
8Ø POKE &41CC,&B3
9Ø POKE &422C,&F9
1ØØ CALL &4ØØ5
11Ø REM data
12Ø DATA 3e,c3,32,35
13Ø DATA ae,21,Øe,be
14Ø DATA 22,36,ae,c3
15Ø DATA ØØ,ac,3e,a7
16Ø DATA 32,8c,53,32
17Ø DATA 36,62,32,92
18Ø DATA 62,c9
```



Death Wish III

Gremlin's gratuitously violent and gory game gets infinite ammunition courtesy of **Mike Wong**. (Method 1.)

```
1 ' Death Wish 3-tape
2 ' by Mike Wong
3 ' Amstrad Action Feb 89
1Ø DATA 21,ØØ,4Ø,11
2Ø DATA ØØ,Ø1,Ø1,ØØ
3Ø DATA Ø2,ed,bØ,c3
4Ø DATA ØØ,Ø1,3e,a6
5Ø DATA 32,8e,21,32
6Ø DATA 34,24,c3,84
7Ø DATA Ø3
8Ø FOR n=&32Ø TO &338
9Ø READ a$:a=VAL("&"+a$)
1ØØ POKE n,a:NEXT
11Ø MEMORY &3FFF
12Ø LOAD"!",&4ØØØ
13Ø POKE &4ØØ5,&2E
14Ø MODE 1:CALL &32Ø
```



Firebird's brontosaurii game is split into two parts and a password is needed to play the second part with levels 79+. *James Indecipherable Signature* has discovered it and wants to share it with you. Take care when you enter it, because it's a long and illogical password.

ZZZ133VZZZZZZ4ZZZ1Z4V44ZZ1Y24V32

STREETHAWK

Mike Wong again, with another tape based lame duck, this time from the Ocean stable *(a duck called* Streethawk *from a stable? – confused ed.)*. It makes you invulnerable to everything, except a bad dose of mixed metaphors. (Method 1.)

```
1 ' Streethawk-tape
2 ' by Mike Wong
3 ' Amstrad Action Feb 89
1Ø FOR n=&BE8Ø TO &BEBA
2Ø READ a$:a=VAL("&"+a$)
3Ø POKE n,a:c=c+a:NEXT
4Ø IF c<>6429 THEN 2ØØ
5Ø MEMORY &39AE:LOAD"sh"
6Ø POKE &39E2,&C3
7Ø POKE &39E3,&89
8Ø POKE &39E4,&BE
9Ø CALL &BE8Ø:END
1ØØ DATA 21,ff,ab,11,4Ø,ØØ
11Ø DATA c3,af,39,3e,45,32
12Ø DATA 4b,ØØ,3e,Øf,32,4e
13Ø DATA ØØ,f3,f1,c9,Ø8,dd
14Ø DATA 21,be,bc,11,36,ØØ
15Ø DATA cd,67,bb,21,aa,be
16Ø DATA 22,ee,bc,c3,c9,bc
17Ø DATA 3e,18,32,2c,85,32
18Ø DATA 32,85,32,cf,93,32
19Ø DATA b1,84,c3,ØØ,a9
2ØØ PRINT"Error..."
```

OUTRUN

One of this column's most prolific contributors, Mike Wong of Sale, has come up with a poke for the tape version of US Gold's huge turkey. It gives you either infinite time or a time from 1Ø-99 seconds. (Method 1.)

```
1 ' Outrun-tape
2 ' by Mike Wong
3 ' Amstrad Action Feb 89
1Ø MODE 2:MEMORY &3217
2Ø x=&BECD:y=x+1
3Ø FOR n=&BE8Ø TO &BED8
4Ø READ a$:a=VAL("&"+a$)
5Ø POKE n,a:c=c+a:NEXT
6Ø IF c<>8691 THEN 33Ø
7Ø INPUT"Inf time (y/n)";a$
8Ø IF a$="n" THEN 11Ø
9Ø POKE x,&37
1ØØ POKE y,&3Ø:GOTO 17Ø
11Ø INPUT"Time limit (1Ø-99 sec)";a
12Ø a$=STR$(a)
13Ø POKE x,&3Ø+VAL(MID$(a$,2,1))
14Ø POKE y,&3Ø+VAL(RIGHT$(a$,1))
15Ø FOR n=&BEBC TO &BECB
16Ø POKE n,Ø:NEXT
17Ø LOAD"":CALL &BE8Ø
18Ø DATA 2a,Øf,bc,22,d7,be
19Ø DATA 21,Øe,bc,36,c3,23
2ØØ DATA 36,94,23,36,be,c3
21Ø DATA 18,32,af,cd,d6,be
22Ø DATA 3a,d5,be,3c,32,d5
23Ø DATA be,fe,Ø2,cØ,21,a9
24Ø DATA be,22,5b,34,c9,dd
25Ø DATA 21,5b,aa,11,ØØ,Ø1
26Ø DATA cd,ea,a9,21,bc,be
27Ø DATA 22,Øa,ab,c3,85,aa
28Ø DATA 21,bØ,2Ø,36,ØØ,23
29Ø DATA 36,ØØ,23,36,ØØ,21
3ØØ DATA 26,21,36,ØØ,21,39
31Ø DATA 39,22,74,Ø3,c3,ØØ
32Ø DATA Ø1,ØØ,cf,53,5Ø
33Ø PRINT"Error..."
```

QUESTOR

The illustrious Graham Smith strikes again with a poke for infinite lives in Cascade's game. (Method 1.)

```
1 ' Questor-tape
2 ' by Graham Smith
3 ' Amstrad Action Feb 89
1Ø FOR j=Ø TO 1Ø:READ a$
2Ø POKE &BE9Ø+j,VAL("&"+a$)
3Ø NEXT j:CLS:a=4885Ø
4Ø LOAD"casrun",a
5Ø POKE &BEF1,24
6Ø POKE &BEF2,149
7Ø CALL a
8Ø DATA 3e,c9,32,17,75,32
9Ø DATA 82,75,c3,7Ø,6e
```



GAME OVER II

The Dinamic game gets infinite lives in both parts, courtesy of Graham Smith.

```
1 ' Game Over II-tape
2 ' by Graham Smith
3 ' Amstrad Action Feb 89
1Ø CLS:OPENOUT "b"
2Ø MEMORY 1999
3Ø CLOSEOUT
4Ø LOAD"c.bin",2ØØØ
5Ø BORDER Ø:INK Ø,Ø:MODE 1
6Ø FOR j=Ø TO 17:READ a$
7Ø POKE 111+j,VAL("&"+a$)
8Ø NEXT j
9Ø IF PEEK(2135)=2Ø5 GOTO 14Ø
1ØØ POKE 2144,195
11Ø POKE 2145,111
12Ø POKE 2146,Ø
13Ø CALL 2ØØØ
14Ø POKE 2135,195
15Ø POKE 2136,12Ø
16Ø POKE 2137,Ø
17Ø CALL 2ØØØ
18Ø DATA 32,ea,8f,cd
19Ø DATA e8,8Ø,c3,63,Ø8
2ØØ DATA 32,c3,9b,cd
21Ø DATA dc,81,c3,5a,Ø8
```



DIZZY

AA37's well crucial cover cassette (transferred to disk version) gets hacked so that you're invulnerable to everything. It comes to you courtesy of **Simon Edmonds** from Portsmouth.

```
1 ' Dizzy special edition
1Ø MODE 1
2Ø MEMORY &3FFF
3Ø INK Ø,Ø:BORDER Ø
4Ø INK 1,26:INK 2,6:INK 3,18
5Ø LOAD"SCREEN"
6Ø LOAD"CODE2"
7Ø FOR a=&A48Ø TO &A4A3
8Ø READ a$
9Ø POKE a,VAL("&"+a$)
1ØØ NEXT
11Ø CALL &A48Ø
12Ø DATA Ø6,Ø9,21,9b
13Ø DATA a4,11,ØØ,5Ø
14Ø DATA cd,77,bc,21
15Ø DATA 4Ø,ØØ,cd,83
16Ø DATA bc,3e,ØØ,32
17Ø DATA Ø9,7d,cd,da
18Ø DATA 7a,ØØ,ØØ,43
19Ø DATA 4f,44,45,31
2ØØ DATA 2e,42,49,4e
```



POKE METHODS ON TAPE

Here's how to input most *Cheat Mode* tape pokes – the instructions for each poke tell you which of the two to use. 664 and 6128 owners: first type |tape.

METHOD 1

Rewind the game tape to the beginning, type in the poke listing and then type RUN and press the Enter key. (Don't use the key marked CTRL or Control, or the poke won't work.) Press the Play key on the cassette deck, then any key on the main keyboard - spacebar does nicely. The tape should now play through as normal.

METHOD 2

Skip the first bit of the game program. To do this, rewind the game tape to the beginning; type in the listing; now type CAT and press Enter.

Start the tape by pressing Play and then any key. Soon you'll see the message: "Found something Block 1". It doesn't matter what the something is, and it varies from game to game. If the *Cheat Mode* instructions just tell you to skip the first block, stop the tape here. If the instructions tell you to skip things, stop the tape when the "Found" message comes up for the last thing you're trying to skip.

Once you've stopped the tape, press Escape, type RUN and press Enter. Now press Play on the tapedeck and any key on the keyboard to start the tape.

THE BARD'S TALE

Part three **GARY BARRETT roams the sewers (no comment)**

Last month the party was left standing at the top of a flight of stairs that descended into the murky depths of the sewer system of Skara Brae. A horrible smell almost as bad as that in the kitchen after Steve's finished microwaving his cabbage greets your nose and you have a simple choice: go down and kick bottom, or run home to mummy.

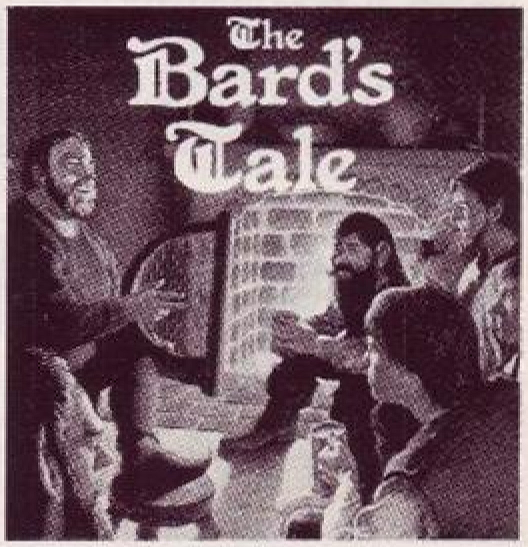
Doze plugz

After taking a deep breath and equipping youself with a pair of nose plugs you descend the stairs to find out what strange things lurk in the polluted waters (!). You emerge in a tunnel with exits to the east and west. Now would be a good time to cast Scry Sight, because it'll make returning to the cellars much easier when you're fleeing from monsters. The stairs are at 7 east and 18 north if you don't have the spell or don't want to waste the spell points.

The first sewer level is fairly unexciting; you encounter larger and larger groups of monsters and find bigger and better treasures hordes, but it's very similar to the cellars. You'll find some areas of darkness which extinguish torches and light-giving spells. Mapping these is not too tricky though, if you use the kick key to move forwards. If you kick and there is a wall in your way the screen briefly lights up to show you that you've hit the wall. Wandering around using this method will soon have the area mapped out. Using a torch or light spell will illuminate the area, but it'll be extinguished as soon as you move again.

Giant spider

The warning message about 'passing the light at night' refers to a corridor in the second level of the sewers (see below). Only one other thing is significant on this level of the sewers, and that's the statue of the giant spider (4 east, 9 north). If you examine the spider then be prepared for a nasty shock, since it turns into a spinner which poisons characters, causing them to lose hit points periodically until they die. *(The only way to stop death is to neutralise the poison with one of three spells: Flesh Restore, Flesh Anew and Restoration. Only the first spell is likely to be available to you (unless*



you've used the poke in AA38), because the other two are both seventh level.) Stairs to the second level of the sewers can be found at 17 east and 14 north, but it's in an area of darkness. Go to 19 east, 11 north and then go north through the door, west, west, north and finally north again to find the stairs.

Monsters in the dark

Level two has two large areas of darkness that you can quite easily get lost in if you're not careful. Magic compass and scry sight are almost essential down here. At 3 east, 4 north there's a magic mouth with an important message about the mad god, but to get to it you need to pass along a corridor with the burning ray mentioned on level one. If it's daylight the ray causes you lots of damage, but at night it's harmless. The only other way to the magic mouth is to use Apport Arcane or Phase Door, both high level spells. The portal which leads to the third and final level of the sewers is found at 5 east, 21 north. Remember to use the Levitation spell to descend or you'll take damage from falling through.

Now that you're deep in the bowels of the earth you'll find the most confusing and deadly maze of passages yet. Monsters are afraid of the dark too and so they go around in big groups looking for poor innocent adventurers to pulverise. Down here you'll find a staircase (17 east, 16 north) that leads back to the surface world of Skara Brae, within the courtyard walls of Mangar's Tower. Entry is not permitted yet, but you can use it as a quick exit to the surface.

After removing your nose plugs you can return to the Adventurer's Guild for a well earned rest. Pop off round the corner to the Review Board to see if you can go up any levels and while you're at it visit Garth to dispose of some of the junk you'll have picked up along the way. Don't discard any magic items unless you really have to. It might be a good idea to drop in at the temple and get healed too. ●

***The Bard's Tale* is published by Electronic Arts, at £8.95 (cassette) and £14.95 (disk).**

NEXT MONTH we go and visit the Mad God's Temple and have a quiet word with the priest about 'Tarjan', the Mad God. That gains you entry to the catacombs, which make the Sewers seem like a quiet walk in the park. If you can survive all that, you'll be quite capable of looking after yourself!

Multiface *The Bard's Tale*

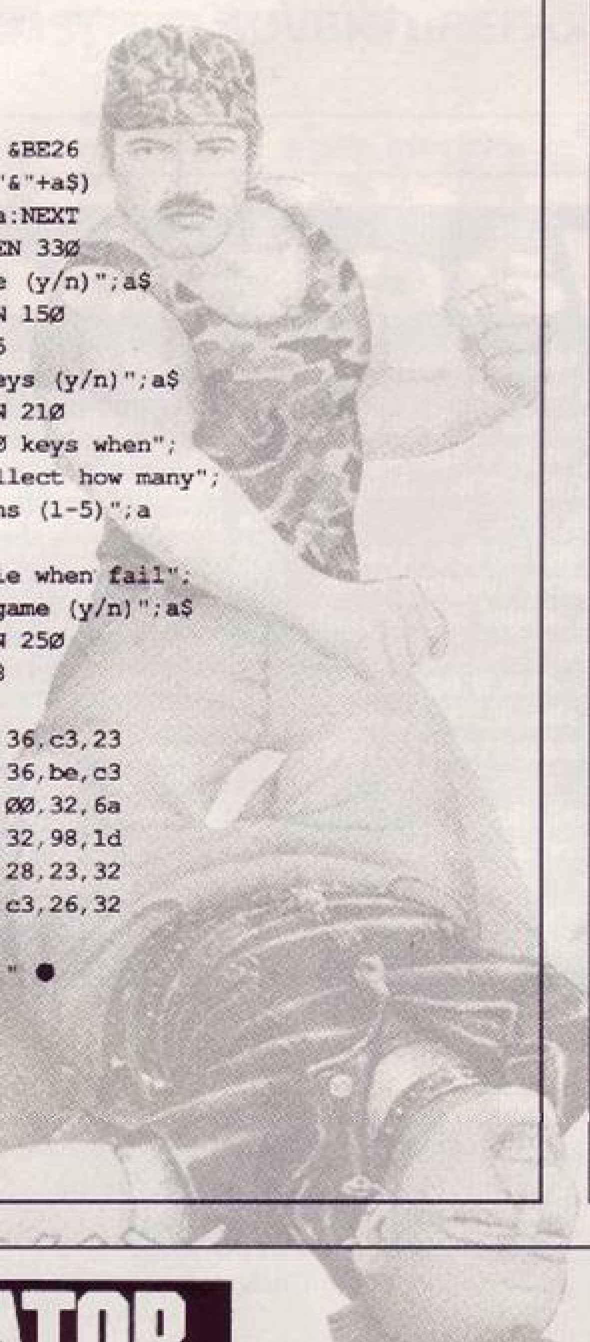
This magical poke modifies character one in the party to have 5000 hit points, 5000 magic points and huge quantities of gold and experience. To go up levels just enter the review board and choose advancement until you get bored and then buy spells if appropriate.

When you've done the first character press 'ESC' and then 'R' to return to the game. Press 'N' to change the marching order of the party until you've altered all of the party.

Don't bother with the spell points poke for classes other than the wizard, conjuror, magician and sorceror because they still won't have any spells to cast.

Addr	Poke	Effect
04da	01	Silly experience
04ea	01	Loadsamoney
04f6	13	|Set Hit points to
04f7	88	| 5000
04f8	13	|Set Condition to
04f9	88	| 5000
04fa	13	|Set maximum Spell
04fb	88	| points to 5000
04fc	13	|Set Current Spell
04fd	88	| points to 5000

JOE BLADE II



Even heroes like Joe get into trouble and so **Mike Wong** comes to his aid with infinite time, extra keys and you don't die if you fail to complete a sub game. (**Method 1**.)

```
1 ' Joe Blade 2-tape
2 ' by Mike Wong
3 ' Amstrad Action Feb 89
1Ø MEMORY &3FFF:MODE 1
2Ø GOSUB 8Ø
3Ø LOAD"!"
4Ø POKE &417F,&8F
5Ø POKE &41CC,&B3
6Ø POKE &422C,&F9
7Ø CALL &4ØØ5:END
8Ø FOR n=&BEØØ TO &BE26
9Ø READ a$:a=VAL("&"+a$)
1ØØ POKE n,a:c=c+a:NEXT
11Ø IF c<>3168 THEN 33Ø
12Ø INPUT"Inf time (y/n)";a$
13Ø IF a$="y" THEN 15Ø
14Ø POKE &BEØF,&35
15Ø INPUT"Extra keys (y/n)";a$
16Ø IF a$="n" THEN 21Ø
17Ø PRINT"Extra 1Ø keys when";
18Ø PRINT" you collect how many";
19Ø INPUT" dustbins (1-5)";a
2ØØ POKE &BE14,a
21Ø PRINT"Don't die when fail";
22Ø INPUT" a sub-game (y/n)";a$
23Ø IF a$="y" THEN 25Ø
24Ø POKE &BE19,&A8
25Ø RETURN
26Ø DATA 21,35,ae,36,c3,23
27Ø DATA 36,Øe,23,36,be,c3
28Ø DATA ØØ,ac,3e,ØØ,32,6a
29Ø DATA 15,3e,Ø5,32,98,1d
3ØØ DATA 3e,7Ø,32,28,23,32
31Ø DATA bc,24,32,c3,26,32
32Ø DATA e2,28,c9
33Ø PRINT"Error..." ●
```

Cybernoid II

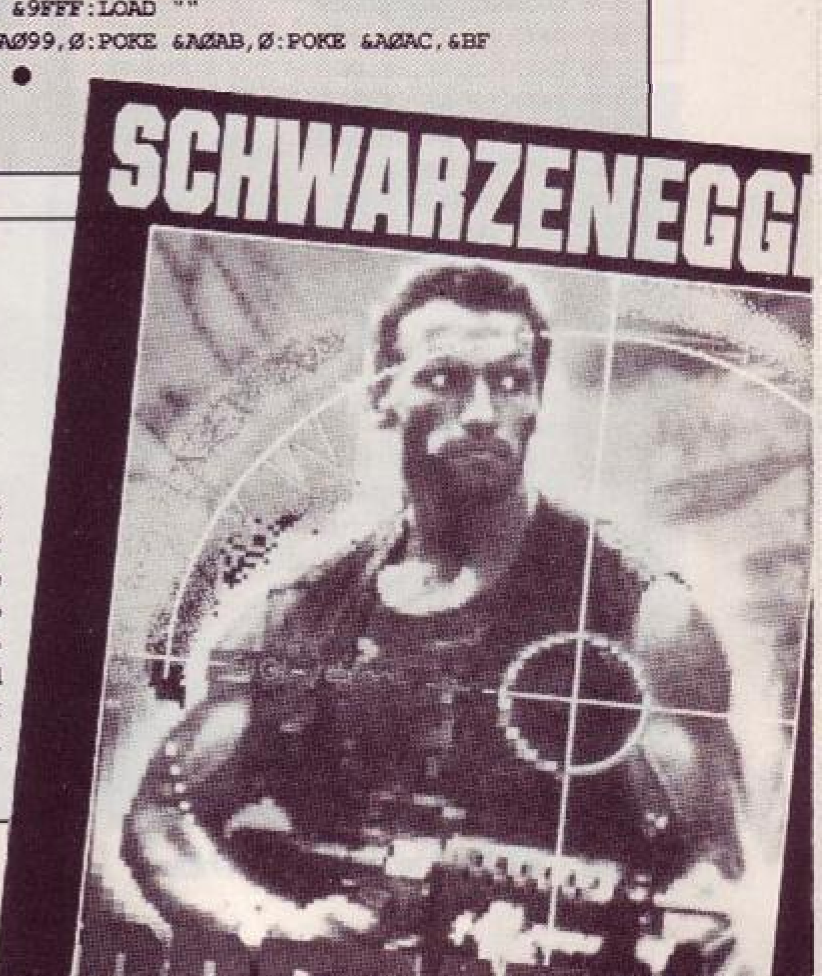
Peter Featherstone of Leeds pokes Hewson's shoot-em-up-in-a-maze game. (**Method 1**.)

```
1 ' Cybernoid II-tape
2 ' by P. Featherstone
3 ' Amstrad Action Feb 89
1Ø MODE 2
2Ø GOSUB 37Ø
3Ø c=Ø
4Ø FOR f=&BFØØ TO &BF45
5Ø READ a$:a=VAL("&"+a$)
6Ø POKE f,a:c=c+a
7Ø NEXT f
8Ø IF c<>5245 THEN PRINT "DATA ERROR":STOP
9Ø DATA Ø6,ØØ,af,cb,4Ø,28,Ø3
1ØØ DATA 32,6b,2b,cb,48,28,Ø3
11Ø DATA 32,2f,16,3e,c3,cb,5Ø
12Ø DATA 28,Ø3,32,Øc,2b,3e,c9
13Ø DATA cb,58,28,Ø3,32,da,28
14Ø DATA cb,6Ø,28,Øc,32,34,22
15Ø DATA 32,ea,2d,32,be,33,32
16Ø DATA 43,2Ø,cb,68,28,Ø3,32
17Ø DATA a4,38,3e,Ø2,32,44,Ø1
18Ø DATA c3,ØØ,Ø1,54,45,41,33
19Ø bit=1
2ØØ opts=Ø
21Ø a$="INF LIVES":GOSUB 32Ø
22Ø a$="INF EXTRAS":GOSUB 32Ø
23Ø a$="INVULNERABILITY":GOSUB 32Ø
24Ø a$="NOTHING FIRES BACK":GOSUB 32Ø
25Ø a$="NO LARGE YUKKIES":GOSUB 32Ø
26Ø a$="NO SMALL YUKKIES":GOSUB 32Ø
27Ø INPUT "SPEED OF GAME (FAST Ø-5 SLOW) ",a
28Ø IF a<Ø OR a>5 THEN a=2
29Ø POKE &BF3B,a
3ØØ POKE &BFØ1,opts
31Ø CALL &AØØØ
32Ø CLS:PRINT "DO YOU WANT ";a$;"?"
33Ø INPUT b$
34Ø IF LEFT$(LOWER$(b$),1)="y" THEN opts=opts+bit
35Ø bit=bit+bit
36Ø RETURN
37Ø MEMORY &9FFF:LOAD ""
38Ø POKE &AØ99,Ø:POKE &AØAB,Ø:POKE &AØAC,&BF
39Ø RETURN ●
```

PREDATOR™

Peter Featherstone's third contribution this month gives you infinite ammo and lives in Arnie's blast-the-alien game. (**Method 1**.)

```
1 ' Predator-tape
2 ' by P.Featherstone
3 ' Amstrad Action Feb 89
1Ø MODE 2
2Ø MEMORY &3FFF
3Ø FOR f=&7DØØ TO &7D4C
4Ø READ a$:POKE f,VAL("&"+a$)
5Ø NEXT f
6Ø LOAD "":CALL &7DØØ
1ØØ DATA 21,Ø9,7d,22,4e,42,c3,bØ,42
11Ø DATA 21,14,7d,22,41,ØØ,3e,c3,32
12Ø DATA 4Ø,ØØ,21,44,7d,11,Ø8,ØØ,3e
13Ø DATA 99,cd,7b,ØØ,2a,46,7d,ed,5b
14Ø DATA 48,7d,3e,88,cd,7b,ØØ,3a,45
15Ø DATA 7d,fe,Ø2,cc,3c,7d,2a,4a,7d
16Ø DATA 22,3a,7d,c3,ØØ,ØØ,af,32,c2
17Ø DATA 35,32,7c,a7,c9,Ø1,Ø1,Ø1,Ø1
18Ø DATA Ø1,Ø1,Ø1,Ø1,ØØ ●
```



URIDIUM

Hewson's shoot-em-up gets infinite lives from **Peter Featherstone** of Leeds. (**Method 1**.)

```
1 ' Uridium-tape
2 ' by P. Featherstone
3 ' Amstrad Action Feb 89
1Ø BORDER Ø:INK Ø,Ø:INK 1,2Ø
2Ø INK 2,26:INK 3,24:MODE 1
3Ø MEMORY &3FFF
4Ø LOAD "!loader"
5Ø POKE &414E,&Ø:POKE &414F,&BF
6Ø FOR f=&BFØØ TO &BFØ6
7Ø READ a$:POKE f,VAL("&"+a$)
8Ø NEXT:CALL &4ØØØ
9Ø DATA af,32,c2,5e,c3,ØØ,4Ø ●
```

And **Julian Page** has been at it as well. The homing missiles no longer bother you and you also have infinite lives. (**Method 1**.)

```
1 ' Uridium Plus-tape
2 ' by Julian Page
3 ' Amstrad Action Feb 89
1Ø 'URIDIUM+ - Tape
2Ø 'By Julian Page
3Ø 'Amstrad Action Dec 88
4Ø MODE 1:BORDER Ø
5Ø INK Ø,Ø:INK 1,2Ø
6Ø INK 2,26:INK 3,24
7Ø MEMORY &3FFF
8Ø LOAD"LOADER"
9Ø POKE &414D,&C9
1ØØ CALL &4ØØØ
11Ø WINDOW 1,4Ø,25,25
12Ø X=Ø:DEFSTR A-B
13Ø FOR X=Ø TO 1
14Ø GOSUB 19Ø
15Ø NEXT X
16Ø CALL &4ØØØ
17Ø DATA INFINITE LIVES,&47AF
18Ø DATA NO HOMING MINE,&47B2
19Ø READ A,C:B=""
2ØØ PRINT A;" Y/N ?"
21Ø WHILE B=""
22Ø B=UPPER$(INKEY$)
23Ø WEND
24Ø IF B<>"Y" THEN RETURN
25Ø FOR Y=C TO C+2
26Ø POKE Y,Ø
27Ø NEXT Y
28Ø RETURN ●
```

ANARCHY

Hewson's anarchic budget game gets infinite lives thanks to **Julian Page** of Shrewsbury. (**Method 1**.)

```
1 'Anarchy-Tape
2 'By Julian Page
3 'Amstrad Action Feb 89
1Ø DATA 41,4E,41,52
2Ø DATA 43,48,59,Ø6
3Ø DATA Ø7,21,ØØ,AØ
4Ø DATA 11,ØØ,CØ,CD
5Ø DATA 77,BC,21,24
6Ø DATA 7F,CD,83,BC
7Ø DATA CD,7A,BC,21
8Ø DATA 6B,7F,11,24
9Ø DATA BF,Ø1,DB,ØØ
1ØØ DATA F3,31,23,BF
11Ø DATA ED,BØ,DD,21
12Ø DATA 62,BF,11,Ø6
13Ø DATA ØØ,CD,8F,BF
14Ø DATA DD,21,7Ø,Ø1
15Ø DATA 11,CØ,6C,CD
16Ø DATA 8F,BF,CD,7Ø
17Ø DATA Ø1,DD,21,ØØ
18Ø DATA BF,11,Ø6,ØØ
19Ø DATA CD,8F,BF,DD
2ØØ DATA 21,7Ø,Ø1,11
21Ø DATA CØ,6C,CD,8F
22Ø DATA BF,3E,C9,32
23Ø DATA A4,Ø1,CD,8Ø
24Ø DATA Ø1,3E,C9,32
25Ø DATA E1,48,C3,ØØ
26Ø DATA 8Ø
27Ø FOR X=Ø TO 1ØØ
28Ø READ A$:A=VAL("&"+A$)
29Ø POKE &AØØØ+X,A
3ØØ C=C+A
31Ø NEXT X
32Ø IF C=&2AD3 THEN 34Ø
33Ø PRINT"ERROR.":STOP
34Ø MODE Ø:CALL &AØØ7 ●
```

Winners of this month's *Mastergame* are Mike Wong, Graham Smith, Peter Featherstone, Julian Page and Simon Edmonds.

Black box

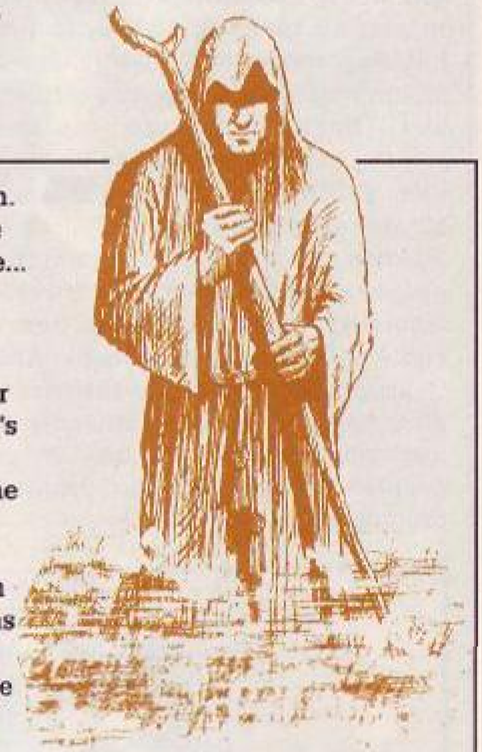
- Most games are heavily protected these days, resulting in longer pokes.
- Many of you have one of the infamous black boxes that can be used to stop programs – the Multiface 2 from Romantic Robot for example.
- Often the only thing that they're used for is transferring games from tape to disk, but they can also be used to hack games for infinite lives etc.
- This occasional section is for owners of the Multiface 2 and similar devices so that they can poke games without typing in huge listings.
- Here's how you enter them:
- Plug the Multiface into the expansion slot at the back of your keyboard. (Multiface 2 owners: make sure that the switch on the front is in the up position.)
- Load the game that you want to poke in the usual manner following the instructions supplied with it. (Multiface 2 owners: move the switch to the down position after it has loaded.)
- Press the red button on the Multiface and a menu appears at the bottom of the screen. Press 'T' for tool and then 'H' to change input to hexadecimal.
- Press the spacebar and type in the number under the Addr column. Next type in the number under the Poke column.
- Repeat this process until you've entered all of the pokes that are listed for the game and then press 'ESC'.
- Press 'R' to return to the game. It then runs with the pokes that you've just entered.

Game	Addr	Poke	Effect
Caves of Doom	2525	ff	255 Lives
Soul of a Robot	23Ø4	ff	255 Lives
Ghosts'n'Goblins	5Ø9c	ØØ	Infinite lives
	5Ø99	18	Next level if you die
	828d	ØØ	Slows down game
	8282	ØØ	Invulnerabilty
	5Ø96	c8	Changes level when Esc pressed
	8564	ØØ	]
	8565	ØØ	]Makes zombies appear more quickly
Space Harrier	Ød74	ØØ	Infinite lives
	1Ø4c	ØØ	]
	1Ø4d	ØØ	]
	1Ø4e	ØØ	]Stop aliens firing
Impossaball	a45b	ca	]
	a45c	4e	]
	a45d	91	]
	a45e	ØØ	]Next level when time runs out
	a462	ØØ	Infinite lives
	962d	c9	Infinite time
	9c23	18	Remove cylinders
	a3bb	c9	Pretty colours!!!
AA Dizzy	7dØ9	ØØ	Invulnerability

PILGRIM

The Pilgrim sets out to discover The Adventurer of 1989

The Pilgrim tackles Anna Popkess and Fergus McNeill of Abstract Concepts; Pat Winstanley wonders about the future for GAC-based games; and the search begins here for AMSTRAD ADVENTURER OF THE YEAR!



ADVENTURER OF THE YEAR

So you think you're tough, eh? Think again, because it's time for the Ultimate Challenge. *Amstrad Action* presents the AMSTRAD ADVENTURER OF THE YEAR competition – a three-stage extravaganza in which adventurers pitch their wits against some of the toughest puzzles ever posed and win the coveted AAY 1989 Trophy, bags of free software, and the chance to contribute to the Pilgrim column in *AA*. Be tough – or be Balrog-fodder!

What's it all about?

The AAY 1989 Trophy and associated prizes will be awarded to the overall winner of the competition. This competition is to be run in two stages, starting this month and continuing in the next issue of *AA*. It will test two basic adventuring skills: general adventuring knowledge and puzzle solving.

The prizes

The first prize winner will have his or her name engraved on the AAY89 Trophy and will be given the trophy for display in his/her house for a year until the next competition. In addition there will be valuable runners-up prizes of Amstrad adventure software. The winner will also be invited to contribute to the *AA* adventure column. Full details of prizes will be announced in the next issue... Don't miss it!

What you do...

All you have to do is answer the questions in this month's section. Next month's issue holds the second stage of the competition and an entry form. That gives you a WHOLE MONTH to research the answers to the questions in this first stage. And you may need it, because they're not easy!

As soon as you've answered all the questions you can in each stage, you send off your entry to The Pilgrim. Hang on, though for full details on entry will be in next month's issue along with the entry form. Meanwhile, get cracking on this month's posers!

NEXT MONTH:
- the entry form;
- the prizes; and
- the second, final stage of the competition.

DON'T MISS OUT!

STAGE ONE: GENERAL ADVENTURE KNOWLEDGE

1. How hot is your games history?

In which game did you:

a) insert batteries into a toy robot?
b) cast an IBM?
c) carry a swag bag?
d) get no tea?
e) wear a wristband?
f) fight Nightingales?
g) steam the rats?
h) hail a cab outside your house?
i) aspire to live in North London.
j) learn how to fly?

Who or what...

a) sat down and sang about gold?
b) went somewhere else?
c) went to the ball as a cowboy?
d) died in a blender?
e) sprung from a frog?
f) flew you over the desert?
g) said Kwah?
h) Made a habit?
i) lay down in front of a bulldozer?
j) came when you said kentilla?

2. Name those games!

Name one game written by each of the following:

1. Fergus McNeill
2. Ram Jam Corporation.
3. Dave Lebling
4. Pete Austin
5. Derek Brewster
6. Peter Killworth
7. Steve Meretsky
8. Adventure International
9. Scott Adams
10. Interplay Productions

Fill in the missing letters to make the name of an adventure:

a) M**d*h**o*
b) L*r* ** *h* **ng*
c) *rba* **st*r*
d) **ss*g* **o* A**ro*e*a
e) **sp*c*
f) T** **bb**
g) *** *o*g*t
h) *m**a** **l*
i) *** **rd* T*l*
j) **n*t*r

ABSTRACT CONCEPTS

Fergus McNeill and Anna Popkess are the driving force behind one of the few labels that still supports the Amstrad market. What do they have to say about the future of adventures? The Pilgrim finds out

Fergus McNeill must be every would-be adventure writer's hero. Who else, after all, could move from programming adventures using the Quill, to getting them published, to forming his own software house (Delta 4), to signing up with Activision/Mediagenic, and – finally, with Anna – to commissioning his own adventure writing system, SWAN, and releasing major titles across several formats?

With all this success behind him, people looked forward to a fruitful collaboration between Fergus and Anna Popkess when they formed Abstract Concepts. Unfortunately, the first title – *Mindfighter* – received mixed reviews and was, the Pilgrim has to say, a deeply flawed game, despite its promise for the future.



● Fergus McNeill: 'the adventure market is essentially a cult industry – and commercialism destroys cults

'Criticism of *Mindfighter* fell into several categories,' says Fergus, 'including those who felt the subject was too 'heavy' for an adventure and those who felt it lacked technical features. We've put all that behind us and put it right too.'

"The future of the text adventure is looking pretty bleak: the 16-bit machines are looking to graphics to deliver gameplay and not enough attention is being paid to the quality of the text"

That means a new approach for their new game *Parisian Knights*, due out very soon for most formats including the Amstrad. The game, to be previewed in *AA* next month, takes place in three parts as you undertake undercover missions in different exotic locations. Your life is continually threatened due to the activities of a mole in your organisation and your ultimate goal is to put the little furry devil out of business.

Although programmed in SWAN, like *Mindfighter*, Fergus and Anna have included some high-level improvements. In particular, you can now FIND.

In addition, the performance of the interactive characters has been beefed up, so these now not only talk to the player but also chat amongst themselves.

And, of course, Fergus and Anna have paid particular attention to the text...'The future of the text adventure is looking pretty bleak,' admits Anna: 'the 16-bit machines are looking to graphics to deliver gameplay and not enough attention is being paid to the quality of the text.' No danger of that with *Parisian Knights*, we hope.

But mention of 16-bit machines and graphics prompts a few stern remarks from the dynamic duo. 'It's just like the music business – Stock, Aitken and Waterman deluging us with tons of Rick Astley and Kylie Minogue, and in the adventure gme market the distributors are pushing for more arcade elements.'

'Even worse,' says Fergus, 'is the attitude of shopkeepers who think there's no point in stocking games unless they're a major arcade licence is influencing kids.' We're being steadily brainwashed by some of the big companies into accepting more and more glossy products. As Fergus angrily declares, 'the adventure market is essentially a cult industry – and commercialism destroys cults. The more commercial it gets, the less room there is for newcomers.' In other words, experimentation and originality die in the face of commercial exploitation.

Let's hope Fergus and Anna hit back with *Parisian Knights* – watch this space.

THE PILGRIM'S POST BAG

Over – and out!

Thanks for your reply to my edited letter in *Amstrad Action*, December. Despite the cuts it did convey most of my feelings. I'll reply to your three points with three more...

1. I still fail to understand how you could have missed Return to Doom's HELP facility in the earlier games that you reviewed.
2. We'll have to continue to disagree on prices. How close have you ever been to the manufacturing process?

However, we are running a special offer. Kingdom of Hamil, Acheton, Philosopher's Quest, and Countdown to Doom retail at 9.95 each. Buy 3 and they're 7.95 each. But all 4 and they're only 6.95 each. Return to Doom stays at 12.95 because we think its worth it and buyers – whose opinions count for us more than yours – seem to agree.

3. I noticed that when you did your review of coming releases/software houses' plans you failed to ask our intentions, and that none of our stuff featured in December's AA Adventure roundup. Happy New Year.

Brian Kerslake, Topologika, PO Box 39, Stilton, Peterborough, PE7 3RL

Readers may be wondering why Brian keeps writing in veiled letters of complaint to this column when his last game got a good review. The only reason the Pilgrim can think of is that he simply wants more publicity!

Anyway, in answer to these three questions – for the last time:

1. As I made clear previously, I didn't 'miss' the help facility in the earlier game – I simply forgot it when reviewing the later one. If you play as many games as I do, you're bound to forget the details of some of them over a period of time. I'm only human.

2. This is an important point. Reviewers never criticise prices on a commercial basis – i.e. on the basis of whether they will or will not make profits for the software house concerned. They review a price simply on the

DEADENDERS

Top Ten. All CPC's
● £1.99 cass



When will amateur adventure writers realize that careless programming is an instant turn off to reviewers?

Deadenders. A GACked spoof on that popular soap opera, simply bristles with bugs which tend to spoil what would otherwise be an enjoyable game.

The plot casts you as the local bobby, Donald Dance, and has you wandering around Herbert Square listening to gossip. Your task is to ascertain the whereabouts of a certain dog by the name of Willie and having done so determine the cause of said dog being squashed flat with two holes in his neck.

Herbert square is populated by your favourite characters, many of whom have a marked aversion to conversing with the constabulary. This together with a remarkably limited vocabulary makes the task of eliciting information remarkably difficult.

A variety of objects clutter the game and supplies of some are eternal. Thus dead rats can be found and removed indefinitely and as for the inexhaustible box of garlic crisps (yes garlic!) an off-beat gourmet should find plenty to eat - not, I'm sure, the programmer's intention.

Character interaction is the main point of this game and worming information out of reluctant residents takes a great deal of trial and error. It quickly becomes tedious asking x,y and z about z,y and x, especially when your informant finally delivers a gossipy gem which has more to do with nasty neighbours than Dirty Dan.

Deadenders is a classic example of a good idea spoilt by sloppy programming and inefficient (if not non-existent) playtesting. The pre-defined structure of GAC Makes bug-hunting simple so there are no excuses for this kind of result - particularly when the game is on commercial release.

Atmosphere	55%
Interaction	50%
Challenge	65%
Overall	55%

GAC to the future – Pat Winstanley comments

"For all that GAC has been available for several years now, very few commercial releases written using the utility have made the shelves. As for the future, the prospects for the amateur author are no better.

"Much of the blame for this state of affairs lies with the writers themselves. It's no use having the best, most original concept in the world if sloppy implementation robs the idea of all impact.

"Nor is it sufficient to assume that technically brilliant use of a utility will produce a playable game if the plot is non-existent.

The only software houses likely to take on utility written games are those which grab any product they can get hold of, and if that product is poor the reputation of GAC written games will sink still further.

However, many games ARE available through user groups and fanzines and these tend to be critically reviewed, thoroughly playtested and highly recommended. This is the route GAC users should follow – aim for the adventure enthusiasts."

The Player's Guide to *Gnome Ranger* – Part 3

by The Paladin

Nearly home! the gate will tell you what to do, and the sign will point you in the right direction.

● Firstly, climb the mountain, but ignore any ferocious sounds on the way up. Well the Yeti to lead the way through the clouds – unless you want to take fatal flying lessons. Collect the rfirst gem and cloudstuff from Cloud 9. Put the cloud stuff in the Yeti's shoes and return the way you came.

● *Wander south-east from the Gate until you reach the lake. Follow the bank until you meet a penguin, then p-p-p-ick up its egg. Now that you're babysitting, go west along the bank until you reach an icebridge. Cross it then – whoops! Wait until you see the penguin again, then aski it to push you to the iceberg. Once there, collect the next gem. the mother will take her offspring and leave. To return to the shore ask the other penguins to push you back.*

● In the north-west corner of the country there is a cave. enter this and continue in until you meet the Fireking. the conflict between the fire and ice peoples can be resolved, by first kidnapping the ice-child, then returning the water to its natural course. To leave the fire kingdom with the child, you must hide it...

● *Oops! We're not quite finished yet. Watch out for the very final and absolutely last part (you can say that again – ed.) next month!*

basis of whether or not the quality of software provided makes it a worthwhile purchase for the consumer. You could produce a rubbish game for £1.99 and I still wouldn't think it was good value for money. On the other hand, if you produced a world-beating blockbuster at £30 I might think it was a bargain. The manufacturing process (which as a matter of fact I have been involved with) is of no relevance.

3. No, you weren't in the list. Nor were lots of other companies. On the other hand, you've had more publicity in this column recently than most, so why do you keep complaining?

This correspondence is now firmly closed!

GAC or Quill?

My friend and I have just formed a small company to produce and sell adventure games. Between us, we have a 464, 6128, and some knowledge of BASIC so we have decided to use one of the utilities available.

As we want to have cassette and disk versions of our games, the PAW is out, so we are left with Quill and GAC. Could you please answer the following:

a) Can the GAC or Quill save a completed game to disk as well as tape?

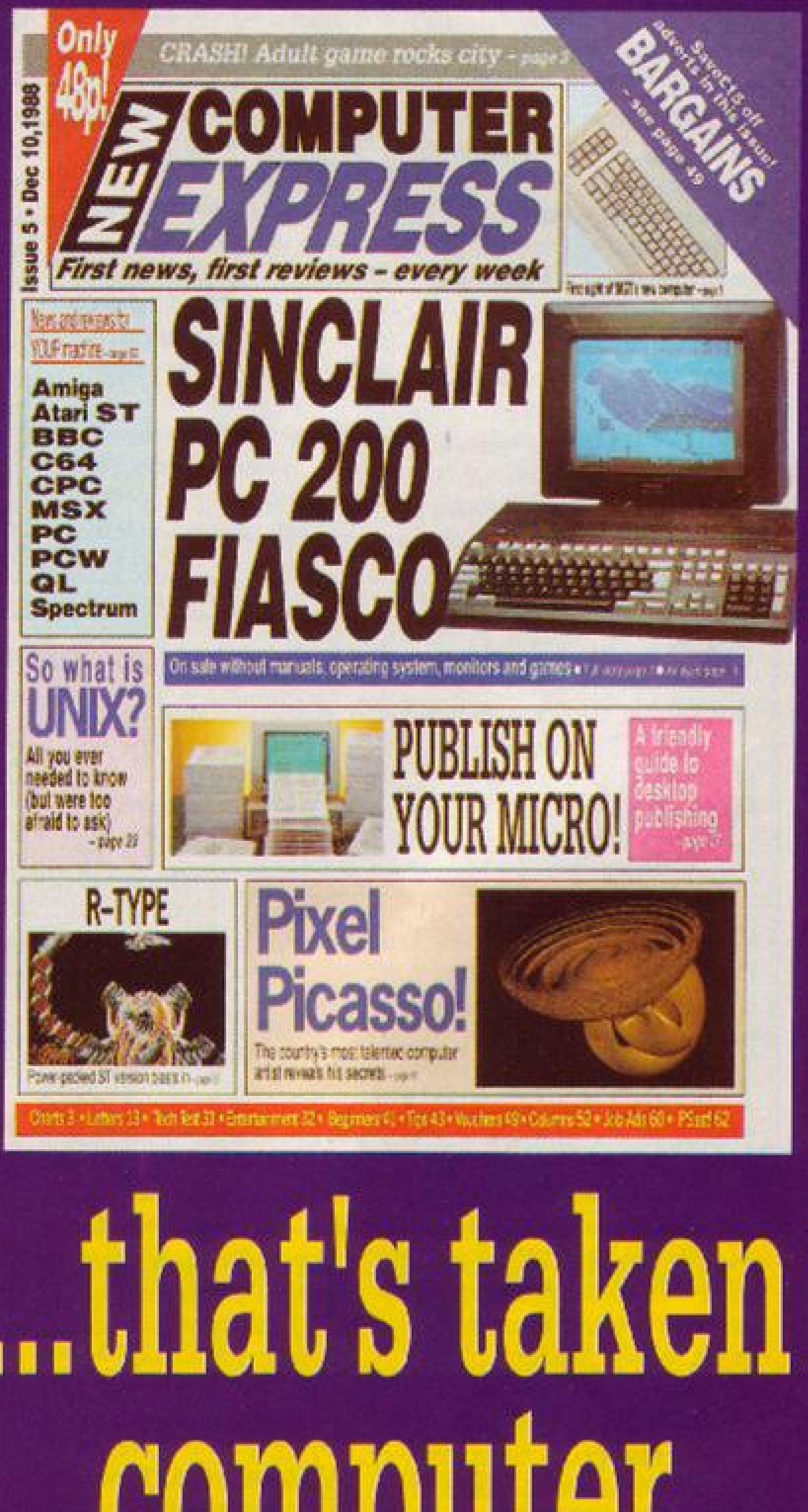
b) Which is the best to produce a good adventure game?

c) What makes a good text only adventure?

d) We hope to release our first game in the first few months of next year. If I send you a copy, will you review it?

Sean Ramplee, LR Adventure Software, Southampton

Sean: (a) Yes. (b) they're both different. Quill is rather more flexible and is, following the price reductions, an excellent buy at £5.95. GAC is somewhat easier to use. You should really try both if you're serious about games production, as you may find one or other unsuitable for your particular titles. (c) Caterpillars. Come on! If you really need to ask this question, should you be writing games? Any game that takes you out of your chair and into another world that you later regret abandoning for reality is OK in my book. (d) Aha! The million dollar question! To find out the answer, send one million dollars to... Seriously, though – the best of luck with your venture and do send in the game when it's finished.


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TYPE-INS

Another colossal collection courtesy of PAT McDONALD

EASIBASE

Looking for a database program for your CPC? Look no further! GILES PARK, who lives in Leeds, has been working away on a superb program that files all your facts and figures into polished blocks of data, easily referred to and hygienic as well. It's a whopper all right – but we're sure you'll agree it's well worth the effort!

● *Giles Park talks about his program over the page*

```
1 ' EasiBase
2 ' Giles Park
3 ' Amstrad Action February 1989
150 REM *** Initialise ***
160 CLEAR
170 DIM NAME$(15)
180 DIM FILE$(200,15)
190 MODE 2
200 DEFINT A-Z
210 PENC=11:SCREEN=0
220 ZONE 15
230 INK 0,0:INK 1,11:BORDER 0
240 PAPER 0:WINDOW #1,1,53,1,25:CLS
250 PAPER 1:WINDOW #0,54,80,1,25:CLS
260 IC=4
270 IF P=1 THEN 400
280 REM *** FIELD NAMES ***
290 CLS #1
300 INPUT #1,"ENTER NO. OF FIELDS";FIL
310 IF FIL>15 THEN 290
320 FOR T=1 TO FIL
330 PRINT #1,"ENTER NAME FOR FIELD";T;:INPUT #1,
    NAME$(T)
340 IF LEN(NAME$(T))>15 THEN 330
350 NEXT
360 REM **** OPTIONS PRINT  ****
370 CLS #1
380 GOSUB 730
390 ZONE 3
400 FOR T=1 TO 10
410 READ A$
420 PEN 0:LOCATE #0,1,(T*2):PRINT #0,T-1,A$
430 NEXT
440 READ A$
450 PEN 0:LOCATE #0,1,(T)*2:PRINT #0," - ",A$
460 READ A$
470 T=T+1
480 PEN 0:LOCATE #0,1,(T)*2:PRINT #0," ^ ",A$
490 PEN 1
500 DATA EXTRA OPTIONS,ALTER ALL RECORDS,ALTER
    PRESENT RECORD,ALTER ONE FIELD,ADD
    FIELD/RECORD,DELETE FIELD/RECORD,CHANGE FIELD
    NAME,DELETE BLANK RECORDS,SORT,SEARCH,DOWN A
    RECORD,UP A RECORD
510 DATA SWAP FIELDS/RECORDS,LOAD FILE,SAVE FILE,
    CAT,ERASE FILE,CHANGE COLOURS,MAIN MENU,
    RESTART,PRINT
520 a$=INKEY$:IF a$="" THEN GOTO 520 ELSE GOSUB 570
530 GOTO 520
540 DEFINT A-Z
550 REM  ****  OPTIONS  ****
560 REM *********************
570 IF a$="^" THEN RECORD=RECORD+1
580 IF a$="-" THEN RECORD=RECORD-1
590 IF a$="6" THEN LOCATE #1,53,14:PRINT #1,"*":
    GOSUB 1000
600 IF a$="9" THEN LOCATE #1,53,20:PRINT #1,"*":
    GOSUB 1050
610 IF a$="5" THEN LOCATE #1,53,12:PRINT #1,"*":
    GOSUB 1150
620 IF a$="4" THEN LOCATE #1,53,10:PRINT #1,"*":
    GOSUB 1440
630 IF a$="2" THEN  START=RECORD:FINISH=RECORD:
    LOCATE #1,53,6:PRINT #1,"*":GOSUB 870
640 IF a$="1" THEN START=0:FINISH=200:LOCATE #1,
    53,4:PRINT #1,"*":GOSUB 870
650 IF a$="8" THEN LOCATE #1,53,18:PRINT #1,"*":
    GOSUB 1740
660 IF a$="7" THEN LOCATE #1,53,16:PRINT #1,"*":
    GOSUB 1880
670 IF a$="0" THEN LOCATE #1,53,2:PRINT #1,"*":
    GOSUB 2140
680 IF A$="3" THEN LOCATE #1,53,8:PRINT #1,"*":
    GOSUB 800
690 IF RECORD>200 THEN RECORD=200
700 IF RECORD<0 THEN RECORD=0
710 GOSUB 730
720 RETURN
730 CLS#1
740 LOCATE #1,1,1:PRINT #1,"RECORD";RECORD
750 FOR T=1 TO FIL
760 ZONE 3:LOCATE #1,1,T+2:ZONE 6:PRINT #1,T,;:
    ZONE 23:PRINT #1,NAME$(T),FILE$(RECORD,T)
770 NEXT
780 RETURN
790 REM *** ALTER ONE FIELD ***
800 LOCATE #1,1,1:INPUT #1,"ENTER FIELD NO. FOR
    DATA";NY
810 ZONE 3:IF NY<16 THEN LOCATE #1,1,NY+2:ZONE 6:
    PRINT #1,NY,;:PRINT #1,NAME$(NY),;:PRINT #1,
    STRING$(32,32)
820 ZONE 3:IF NY<16 THEN LOCATE #1,1,NY+2:ZONE 6:
```

HOW TO USE EASIBASE

The first thing that you must do is specify the number of fields you want. This can be any number from 1-10 – but only use a field up if you really need it.

Then you have a menu of different options to look at. These are selected by pressing either one of the number keys along the top row, or a couple of keys adjacent to them.

0 – Gives a list of yet more options!
1 – Allows you to alter all of the records. To go back to the menu, enter END.
2 – Just lets you at the displayed record only.
3 – Alter one field within the present record only.
4 – Add a field or record anywhere in the file.
5 – Delete a field or record.
6 – Change field names.
7 – Deletes all blank records.
8 – Sorts all the records into alphabetical order.
9 – Search for a particular entry in a field.
- – Move to the previous record.
[up arrow] – Move to next record.

Even more

Once you have selected option 0 from the main menu, you're taken direct to the extra menu.

This is for general housekeeping tasks, as follows:–

0 – Swap two fields or two records.
1 – Load a new database.
2 – Save the current database.
3 – Catalogue a tape or disk.
4 – Erase a file from a disk.
5 – Change screen colours.
6 – Go back to the main menu.
7 – Reset the database.
8 – Print all of the records out on a printer.

```
    PRINT #1,NY,;:PRINT #1,NAME$(NY),;:INPUT #1,
    FILE$(RECORD,NY)
830 IF LEN(FILE$(RECORD,NY))>30 THEN LOCATE #1,1,
    NY+2:ZONE 6:PRINT #1,NY,;:PRINT #1,NAME$(NY),;
    :PRINT #1,STRING$(LEN(FILE$(RECORD,NY))+2,32):
    GOTO 800
840 GOSUB 730
850 GOTO 520
860 REM ALTER ONE RECORD AND ALTER ALL RECORDS
870 FOR RECORD=START TO FINISH
880 GOSUB 730
890 FOR T=1 TO FIL
900 OLDFILE$=FILE$(RECORD,T)
910 ZONE 3:LOCATE #1,1,T+2:ZONE 6:PRINT #1,T,;:
    PRINT #1,NAME$(T),;:INPUT #1,FILE$(RECORD,T)
920 IF LEN(FILE$(RECORD,T))>30 THEN ZONE 3:LOCATE
    #1,1,T+2:ZONE 6:PRINT #1,T,;:PRINT #1,NAME$(T)
    ,;:PRINT #1,STRING$(LEN(FILE$(RECORD,T))+2,32)
    :GOTO 910
930 IF FILE$(RECORD,T)="" THEN FILE$(RECORD,T)=
    OLDFILE$
940 IF FILE$(RECORD,T)="END" THEN FILE$(RECORD,T)
    ="":GOTO 840
950 NEXT
960 NEXT
970 RECORD=RECORD-1
980 RETURN
990 REM *** CHANGE FIELD NAME ***
1000 LOCATE #1,1,1:INPUT #1,"ENTER FIELD TO
     CHANGE";NY
1010 LOCATE #1,1,2:PRINT #1,"ENTER NEW FIELD
     NAME      "
1020 ZONE 3:LOCATE #1,1,NY+2:ZONE 6:PRINT #1,NY,;
     :PRINT #1,NAME$(NY),;:INPUT #1,NAME$(NY)
1030 RETURN
1040 REM *** SEARCH ***
1050 LOCATE #1,1,1:INPUT #1,"ENTER FIELD NUMBER";
     NO
1060 LOCATE #1,1,1:INPUT #1,"ENTER DATA FOR FIELD"
     ;SEARCH$
1070 CLS #1
1080 FOR T=0 TO 200
1090 LOCATE #1,1,1:PRINT #1,"SEARCHING RECORD";T
     ;"      "
1100 IF FILE$(T,NO)=SEARCH$ THEN RECORD=T:RETURN
1110 NEXT
1120 RECORD=1
1130 RETURN
1140 REM *** DELETE A FIELD/RECORD ***
1150 LOCATE #1,1,1:INPUT #1,"DELETE FIELD(F) OR
     RECORD(R)";Q$
1160 IF Q$="R" OR Q$="r" THEN 1200
1170 LOCATE #1,1,1:PRINT #1,STRING$(40,32)
1180 LOCATE #1,1,1:INPUT #1,"ENTER FIELD NO. TO
     DELETE";NO
1190 GOTO 1310
1200 LOCATE #1,1,1:INPUT #1,"ENTER RECORD NO. TO
     DELETE";NO
1210 FOR T=1 TO FIL
1220 FILE$(NO,T)=""
1230 NEXT
1240 FOR T=NO TO 199
1250 LOCATE #1,1,1:PRINT #1,"RECORD";T
1260 FOR Y=1 TO FIL
1270 FILE$(T,Y)=FILE$(T+1,Y)
1280 NEXT
1290 NEXT
1300 RETURN
1310 FOR T=NO TO FIL-1
1320 NAME$(T)=NAME$(T+1)
1330 NEXT
1340 FOR T=0 TO 200
1350 LOCATE #1,1,1:PRINT #1,"RECORD";T
1360 FOR Y=NO TO FIL-1
1370 FILE$(T,Y)=FILE$(T,Y+1)
1380 NEXT
1390 NEXT
1400 NAME$(FIL)="":FOR T=0 TO 200:FILE$(T,FIL)=""
     :NEXT
1410 FIL=FIL-1
1420 RETURN
1430 REM *** ADD A FIELD/RECORD ***
1440 LOCATE #1,1,1:INPUT #1,"ADD FIELD(F) OR
     RECORD(R)";Q$
1450 LOCATE #1,1,1:INPUT #1,"ENTER NO. FOR NEW
     FIELD/RECORD";NO
1460 LOCATE #1,1,1:PRINT #1,STRING$(32,32);
1470 IF Q$="R" OR Q$="r" THEN 1530
1480 FIL=FIL+1
1490 FOR T=FIL TO NO+1 STEP -1
1500 NAME$(T)=NAME$(T-1)
1510 NEXT
1520 GOTO 1630
1530 FOR T=199 TO NO  STEP -1
```

GILES PARK, author of Easibase, talks about himself and his programming

."I'm 18 and I attend Park Lane Co.llege (no, it's not named after me!) in Leeds where I'm studying for an OND in computer studies. My interest in computers began when I got a colour 464 for Christmas about four years ago. Since then I've obtained lots of extra hardware such as a printer, AMX mouse, light pen and speech synthesiser. Until a year ago I was mainly interested in games and light programming. All that changed, though, when I bought a disk drive and assembler.

"When I started college I began programming in earnest (no, it's not a computer language!): but simple games and utilities turned out disasters, due to lack of organisation in planning. Writing Pascal programs, with full documentation, flowcharts and pseudo-code made me much more effective. After that it was fairly simple to convert Pascal programs into Basic versions.

"Easibase originated from a smaller database I wrote in Pascal as a college assignment. Originally it only had a few options, such as delete, amend and add records. As I learnt new Pascal routines I would convert them to Basic and add them to my database. The hardest was the sort routine.

"The reason I converted the Pascal database into Basic was so my father could use the home computer as well. He's secretary of a model railway association and has to keep lists of members, addresses and so on. When I bought my disk drive I also bought a database for him to use. After a while it became clear it was totally unsuitable for his needs and



● Giles Park, 18: "I bought a database and found it was totally unsuitable, and very unfriendly too. So I wrote my own!"

was also very unfriendly (no, I'm not telling you which one it was!). So I concentrated on those aspects of my own database.

"I'm now in my second year at college, and we now program in Cobol. Chances are that later this year we'll have to write a Cobol database as an assignment – so there could be Basic, Pascal *and* Cobol versions of Easibase! We also work in *dBase II* at college and I can also program in assemble, making five languages in all (not counting French).

"My main interest now is programming in assemble. I've written demos in it and would like eventually to write an assemble game, though I've already discovered what a hard field of programming this is.

"I'd definitely say to anyone who was interested in programming that they should try to do it as a college course. It's the best way to learn, and you get a wider range of experience than you would just working on your own."

```
1540 LOCATE #1,1,1:PRINT #1,"RECORD";T
1550 FOR Y=1 TO FIL
1560 FILE$(T+1,Y)=FILE$(T,Y)
1570 NEXT
1580 NEXT
1590 FOR T=1 TO FIL
1600 FILE$(NO,T)=""
1610 NEXT
1620 RETURN
1630 LOCATE #1,1,1:INPUT #1,"ENTER NEW NAME";
   NAME$(NO)
1640 IF NO>FIL-1 THEN RETURN
1650 FOR X=0 TO 200
1660 LOCATE #1,1,1:PRINT #1,"RECORD";X
1670 FOR T=FIL TO NO+1 STEP -1
1680 FILE$(X,T)=FILE$(X,T-1)
1690 IF NO=1 THEN FILE$(X,1)=" "
1700 NEXT
1710 NEXT
1720 RETURN
1730 REM *** SORT ***
1740 LOCATE #1,1,1:INPUT #1,"ENTER FIELD TO SORT
   BY";NO
1750 FOR Y=0 TO RECORD
1760 FOR X=0 TO RECORD-1
1770 LOCATE #1,1,1:PRINT #1,"RECORD";X
1780 LOCATE #1,1,2:PRINT #1,"PASS";Y
1790 IF FILE$(X,NO)>FILE$(X+1,NO) THEN 1800 ELSE
   M=M+1:GOTO 1840
1800 M=0
1810 FOR T=1 TO FIL
1820 A$=FILE$(X,T):FILE$(X,T)=FILE$(X+1,T):FILE$
   (X+1,T)=A$
1830 NEXT
1840 NEXT
1850 NEXT
1860 RETURN
1870 REM *** DELETE BLANK RECORDS ***
1880 M=0
1890 C=0
1900 FOR T=0 TO RECORD
1910 M=0
1920 FOR Y=1 TO FIL
1930 IF FILE$(T,Y)="" THEN M=M+1
1940 NEXT
1950 IF M=FIL THEN C=C+1
1960 NEXT
1970 FOR T=0 TO C
1980 LOCATE #1,1,2:PRINT #1,"PASS";T
1990 FOR X=0 TO RECORD-1
2000 M=0
2010 LOCATE #1,1,1:PRINT #1,"RECORD";X
2020 FOR F=1 TO FIL
2030 IF FILE$(X,F)="" THEN M=M+1
2040 NEXT
2050 IF M=FIL THEN 2060 ELSE 2100
2060 FOR F=1 TO FIL
2070 FILE$(X,F)=FILE$(X+1,F)
2080 FILE$(X+1,F)=""
2090 NEXT
2100 NEXT
2110 NEXT
2120 RETURN
2130 REM *** EXTRA OPTIONS ***
2140 CLS #0
2150 FOR T=0 TO 8
2160 READ B$
2170 ZONE 3
2180 PEN 0:LOCATE #0,1,(T*2)+2:PRINT #0,T,B$
2190 NEXT
2200 A$=INKEY$:IF A$="" THEN 2200 ELSE GOSUB 2220
2210 GOTO 2200
2220 IF A$="1" THEN GOSUB 2730
2230 IF A$="2" THEN GOSUB 2730
2240 IF A$="3" THEN GOSUB 2330
2250 IF A$="4" THEN GOSUB 2410
2260 IF A$="7" THEN GOTO 2490
2270 IF A$="5" THEN GOSUB 2520
2280 IF A$="0" THEN 3260
2290 IF A$="6" THEN RESTORE:PAPER 0:WINDOW #1,1,53
```

```
,1,25:CLS:PAPER 1:WINDOW #0,54,80,1,25:CLS:
   GOTO 390
2300 IF A$="8" THEN GOSUB 2610
2310 RETURN
2320 REM *** CATALOGUE DISK ***
2330 CLS #1
2340 WINDOW #0,1,53,1,25
2350 WINDOW #1,54,80,1,25
2360 PAPER 0:PEN 1:CAT
2370 WINDOW #0,54,80,1,25
2380 WINDOW #1,1,53,1,25
2390 RETURN
2400 REM *** ERASE FILE FROM DISK ***
2410 GOSUB 2330
2420 LOCATE #1,1,24:INPUT #1,"ENTER NAME TO
   DELETE";DEL$
2430 LOCATE #1,1,25:INPUT #1,"ARE YOU SURE";Q$
2440 IF Q$="n" OR Q$="N" THEN 2460
2450 |ERA,@DEL$
2460 GOSUB 2330
2470 RETURN
2480 REM *** RESTART AGAIN ***
2490 LOCATE #1,1,1:INPUT #1,"ARE YOU SURE";Q$
2500 IF Q$="Y" OR Q$="y" THEN 160 ELSE 2200
2510 REM *** CHANGE SCREEN COLOURS ***
2520 PENC=PENC+1
2530 SCREEN=SCREEN+1
2540 IF PENC>15 THEN PENC=0
2550 IF SCREEN>15 THEN SCREEN=0
2560 INK 1,PENC
2570 INK 0,SCREEN
2580 BORDER SCREEN
2590 RETURN
2600 REM *** PRINT TO PRINTER ***
2610 FOR RECORD=0 TO 200
2620 CLS#1
2630 LOCATE #1,1,1:PRINT #1,"RECORD";RECORD
2640 LOCATE 1,1:PRINT #8,"RECORD";RECORD
2650 FOR T=1 TO FIL
2660 ZONE 3:LOCATE #1,1,T+2:ZONE 6:PRINT #1,T,;:
   ZONE 23:PRINT #1,NAME$(T),FILE$(RECORD,T)
2670 ZONE 3:LOCATE 1,T+2:ZONE 6:PRINT #8,T,;:ZONE
   23:PRINT #8,NAME$(T),FILE$(RECORD,T)
2680 ON BREAK GOSUB 2210
2690 NEXT
2700 NEXT
2710 RETURN
2720 REM *** LOAD A FILE/SAVE A FILE ***
2730 CLS #1
2740 LOCATE #1,1,1:INPUT #1,"ENTER NO.OF FIELDS";
   FIL
2750 IF FIL>15 THEN 2730
2760 IF A$="1" THEN GOSUB 2810
2770 IF A$="2" THEN GOSUB 3050
2780 IF RECORD>200 THEN 2730
2790 GOSUB 730
2800 RETURN
2810 CLS #1
2820 LOCATE #1,1,1:INPUT #1,"ENTER FILE NAME";NM$
2830 IF LEN(NM$)>8 THEN 2810
2840 ON BREAK GOSUB 2790
2850 OPENIN NM$+".EAS"
2860 ON BREAK GOSUB 2210
2870 FOR REC=0 TO 200
2880 LOCATE #1,1,2:PRINT #1,"RECORD";REC
2890 FOR FL=1 TO FIL
2900 INPUT #9,FILE$(REC,FL)
2910 NEXT
2920 NEXT
2930 FOR FL=1 TO FIL
2940 INPUT #9,NAME$(FL)
2950 IF EOF=-1 THEN GOTO 2970
2960 NEXT
2970 CLOSEIN
2980 FIL=FL
2990 LOCATE #1,1,3:PRINT #1,"FINISHED"
3000 RECORD=0
3010 LOCATE #1,1,4:PRINT #1,"PRESS SPACE"
3020 IF INKEY(47)=0 THEN 3030 ELSE 3020
3030 CLS #1
3040 RETURN
3050 CLS #1
3060 LOCATE #1,1,1:INPUT #1,"ENTER FILE NAME";NM$
3070 IF LEN(NM$)>8 THEN 3050
3080 OPENOUT NM$+".EAS"
3090 FOR REC=0 TO 200
3100 LOCATE #1,1,2:PRINT #1,"RECORD";REC
3110 FOR FL=1 TO FIL
3120 WRITE #9,FILE$(REC,FL)
3130 NEXT
3140 NEXT
3150 FOR FL=1 TO FIL
3160 WRITE #9,NAME$(FL)
3170 NEXT
3180 CLOSEOUT
3190 LOCATE #1,1,3:PRINT #1,"FINISHED"
3200 RECORD=0
3210 LOCATE #1,1,4:PRINT #1,"PRESS SPACE"
3220 IF INKEY(47)=0 THEN 3230 ELSE 3220
3230 CLS #1
3240 RETURN
3250 REM *** SWAP A FIELD/RECORD ***
3260 LOCATE #1,1,1:INPUT #1,"SWAP RECORDS(R) OR
   FIELDS(F)";Q$
3270 LOCATE #1,1,1:PRINT #1
   ,"                                          "
3280 IF Q$="R" OR Q$="r" THEN 3430
3290 ORECORD=RECORD
3300 LOCATE #1,1,1:PRINT #1,"ENTER FIELDS TO
   SWAP";
3310 LOCATE #1,1,2:INPUT #1,"ENTER 1ST FIELD";NO1
3320 LOCATE #1,1,2:PRINT #1
   ,"                                          "
3330 LOCATE #1,1,2:INPUT #1,"ENTER 2ND FIELD";NO2
3340 CLS #1
3350 FOR RECORD=0 TO 200
3360 LOCATE #1,1,1:PRINT #1,"RECORD";RECORD
3370 T$=FILE$(RECORD,NO1):FILE$(RECORD,NO1)=FILE$
   (RECORD,NO2):FILE$(RECORD,NO2)=T$
3380 NEXT
3390 T$=NAME$(NO1):NAME$(NO1)=NAME$(NO2):NAME$
   (NO2)=T$
3400 RECORD=ORECORD
3410 GOSUB 730
3420 RETURN
3430 LOCATE #1,1,1:PRINT #1
   ,"                                          "
3440 LOCATE #1,1,1:PRINT #1,"ENTER RECORDS TO
   SWAP";
3450 LOCATE #1,1,2:INPUT #1,"ENTER 1ST RECORD";NO1
3460 LOCATE #1,1,2:PRINT #1
   ,"                                          "
3470 LOCATE #1,1,2:INPUT #1,"ENTER 2ND RECORD";NO2
3480 CLS #1
3490 FOR FL=1 TO FIL
3500 T$=FILE$(NO1,FL):FILE$(NO1,FL)=FILE$(NO2,FL):
   FILE$(NO2,FL)=T$
3510 NEXT
3520 RECORD=NO1
3530 GOSUB 730
3540 RETURN ●
```

A.L.P.H.A.B.E.T

This friendly little program from STEPHEN BURGESS of Warrington first displays the whole alphabet. It then repeats, but takes a letter out: you have to input which letter is missing. It's very good for 5-7 year olds, with lots of prompts in big friendly letters. We're impressed: we just can't get enough educational *Type-Ins*.

```
1 'Alphabet
2 'By Stephen Burgess
3 'Amstrad Action February 1989
10 MODE 0
20 CLS
30 LOCATE 1,12
40 PRINT" ALPHABET  ALPHABET "
50 FOR n=1 TO 6
60 t=TIME
70 WHILE TIME<t+100:INK 1,6
80 WEND
90 t=TIME
100 WHILE TIME<t+100:INK 1,18
110 WEND
120 t=TIME
130 WHILE TIME<t+100:INK 1,24
140 WEND
150 NEXT
160 CLS
170 PRINT"Hello":SOUND 1,293,25:PRINT
180 PRINT"This  is  the  fun  ALPHABET game."
190 PRINT:PRINT"Now remember to      press ENTER
    after   you  type  in  your answers"
200 PRINT
210 INPUT"What is your name";nam1$
220 CLS:SOUND 1,293,25
230 PRINT"hello ";nam1$
240 INPUT"Are you by yourself      (y/n) {ENTER}"
    ;an$
250 IF an$="y" THEN nam2$="":GOTO 290:' If playing
    alone set second player's name variable to
    empty string for reference later in program.
    Skip asking for second player's name.
260 CLS:SOUND 1,293,25
270 PRINT"Hello player two":PRINT
280 INPUT"What is your name";nam2$
290 CLS:SOUND 1,293,25
300 PRINT"Each time ALL the   alphabet will be
    shown,then it will  disappear.":PRINT
310 PRINT"For game 1 when it  reappears one
    letterwill  be missing.":PRINT:PRINT"For game
    2  only   four letters will   reappear and the
    fifth letter will bemissing"
320 PRINT"You  must  decide   which letter is
    missing and tell me by pressing the
    correct key.":PRINT:PRINT
330 INPUT "Which game would youlike (1 or 2)";game
340 IF game<>1 AND  game<>2 THEN 330
350 sco1=0:sco2=0:pl=1:cycle=0:'set player's score
    variables to 0.Set player variable to 1st
    player for 1st cycle.set cycle variable to 0.
360 CLS:SOUND 1,293,25
370 GOSUB 510:' goto game routine.
380 IF nam2$<>"" AND pl=1 THEN pl=2:GOTO 400:'If
    2 players playing and 1st player has just had
    a turn then let next turn be for player 2.
390 IF nam2$<>"" AND pl=2 THEN pl=1:'If 2nd player
    just had a turn then let next turn be for
    player 1.
400 IF nam2$<>"" THEN cycle=cycle+1:'If 2 players
    playing then increase cycle by 1 (i.e.Each
    player has 10 turns)
410 IF nam2$="" THEN cycle=cycle+2:'If 1 player
    only then increase cycle by 2 (i.e. 10 turns)
420 IF cycle=20 THEN 440'when 10 turns gone goto
    end routine.
430 GOTO 360:'Repeat game cycle.
440 CLS:SOUND 1,293,25
450 IF nam2$="" AND sco1=10 THEN PRINT"Well done "
    ;nam1$:PRINT:PRINT"You scored 10 out   of 10":
    GOTO 480
460 IF nam2$="" AND sco1<10 THEN PRINT nam1$:PRINT
    :PRINT"you scored ";sco1;" out    of 10":PRINT
    :PRINT"See if you can do   better next time.":
    GOTO 480
470 PRINT nam1$:PRINT:PRINT"You scored ";sco1;"
    out    of 10":PRINT:PRINT nam2$:PRINT:PRINT
    "You scored ";sco2;" out    of 10"
480 LOCATE 1,14 :INPUT "Do you want another game
    (y/n) {ENTER}";anoth$
490 IF anoth$="y" THEN 10
500 END
510 CLS
520 IF pl=1 THEN nam3$=nam1$:'This line and next
    3 transfer present player's name and score to
    game routines player and score variables
    depending on who's turn it is.
530 IF pl=1 THEN scopl=sco1
540 IF pl=2 THEN nam3$=nam2$
550 IF pl=2 THEN scopl=sco2
560 t=TIME
570 LOCATE 1,8
580 FOR n=97 TO 122:'this prints the alphabet.
590 PRINT CHR$(n);
600 NEXT
610 PRINT:PRINT:PRINT"      (WAIT)"
620 WHILE TIME<t+3000:'holds alphabet on screen
    for 10 seconds to refresh childs memory.
630 WEND
640 CLS:SOUND 1,293,25
650 PRINT nam3$;"'s turn"
660 PRINT nam3$;"'s score=";scopl
670 IF game=2 THEN rl=INT(RND*22)+101 ELSE rl=INT
    (RND*26)+97:'Determines random letter(rl) for
    game 2 or else game 1 by default.
680 LOCATE 1,8
690 IF game=2 THEN 740:'If game 2 selected skip
    lines 790 to 820 which print alphabet minus 1
    letter for game 1.
700 FOR n=97 TO (rl-1):PRINT CHR$(n);
710 NEXT
720 FOR n=(rl+1) TO 122:PRINT CHR$(n);
730 NEXT
740 IF game=2 THEN LOCATE 1,8
750 IF game=2 THEN PRINT CHR$(rl-4);CHR$(rl-3);
    CHR$(rl-2);CHR$(rl-1);"?":'Gives 1st 4 letters
    of sequence for game 2.
760 LOCATE 1,18
770 INPUT"Which letter is      missing";geus$
780 CLS:SOUND 1,293,25
790 an$=CHR$(rl):'Sets answer to random letter
    selected previously.
```

```
800 PRINT"The missing letter   was ";an$:PRINT
810 IF geus$<>an$ OR geus$<>UPPER$(an$) THEN GOSUB
    860 ELSE GOSUB 910
820 IF pl=1 THEN sco1=scopl:'This line (or next)
    returns the updated score from game routine to
    appropriate players' score variable.
830 IF pl=2 THEN sco2=scopl
840 o$=""
850 RETURN
860 IF geus$<>an$ OR geus$<>UPPER$(an$) THEN PRINT
    "Sorry,";nam3$;" you are wrong.":SOUND 1,800,
    40:SOUND 1,900,80:PRINT
870 PRINT "Your score is still  only ";scopl:
    PRINT
880 IF nam2$<>"" THEN INPUT "Please press 'o' for
    Other player's turn.    (Then ENTER)";o$ ELSE
    INPUT"Press 'c' to          continue";c$
890 IF o$<>"o" AND c$<>"c" THEN 880
900 RETURN
910 IF geus$=an$ OR geus$=UPPER$(an$) THEN PRINT
    nam3$;" you are correct":SOUND 1,300,30:SOUND
    1,250,30:SOUND 1,200,30:SOUND 1,100,90:PRINT
920 scopl=scopl+1:'increment score by 1
930 PRINT"your score is now";scopl:PRINT
940 IF nam2$<>"" THEN INPUT "Please press 'o' for
    Other player's turn.    (Then ENTER)";o$ ELSE
    INPUT"Press 'c' to          continue";c$
950 IF o$<>"o" AND c$<>"c" THEN 940
960 RETURN ●
```

UNERASE

Many is the time we've received pleas from people who have accidentally erased precious files. Here's a friendly program from BENJAMIN MAIZELS of Bromley.

It's been designed to be as easy as possible to use: simply type |UNERASE, and the program prompts you to enter the filenames of the missing files. Then hey presto! They're back.

It can't cope with disks that have been reformatted. But then again, nothing else can either. It works with both System and Data formats, the two most common types.

Once the message 'That's all Folks!' has appeared, you can go through the updated disk again. Alternatively, exit the program and catalogue your restored programs in all their glory.

```
1 'Unerase
2 'By Benjamin Maizels
3 'Amstrad Action February 1989
50 '
60 CLS:CLEAR:POKE &BE78,&FF:MEMORY &4FFF
70 l=1000:i=&5000
80 READ a$
90 FOR k=1 TO 31 STEP 2
100 b$=MID$(a$,k,2):a=VAL("&"+b$)
110 sum=sum+a:POKE i,a:i=i+1
120 NEXT k
130 check$=RIGHT$(a$,3):check=VAL("&"+check$)
140 IF check<>sum THEN PRINT "ERROR in line";l:END
150 sum=0:l=l+10:IF l=1410 THEN 170
160 GOTO 80
170 CALL &5000
180 PRINT "Type |UNERASE to run program.":PRINT
190 NEW
1000 DATA 210950010D50C3D1BC000000001250C344D
1010 DATA 5D50554E45524153C500E17ECD5ABB236A4
1020 DATA B720F8E9213550CDD4BCD239502236507BE
1030 DATA 79323850C984000000CD1A500D0A2A2A422
1040 DATA 204552524F52202A2A0D0A0D0A00C921336
1050 DATA 5550C3275085215C50C3275089CD1A5062B
1060 DATA 0D0A496E7365727420646973632C20614FC
1070 DATA 6E6420707265737320616E79206B65795F0
1080 DATA 203A0D0A0D0A00CD06BBCD56503E04DF4AA
1090 DATA 3650CD24502100801E0016020E41DF36402
1100 DATA 50D2B3503E0232B1503E4132B250C305613
1110 DATA 510000CD24502100801E0016000EC1DF415
1120 DATA 3650D2D2503E0032B1503EC132B250C36E1
1130 DATA 0551CD1A500D0A0D0A2A2A204552524F367
1140 DATA 52202A2A2020466F726D6174206E6F744E0
1150 DATA 207265636F676E697365642021212 10D4D3
1160 DATA 0A0D0A00C93AB250FE4ACA4752FECACA763
1170 DATA 4752CD24502100801E003AB150573AB2517
1180 DATA 504FDF3650D23950210080CDE6517E236A5
1190 DATA FE00CA0E52FE01CA0E52FE02CA0E52FE779
1200 DATA 03CA0E52FE04CA0E52FE05CA0E52FE0668A
1210 DATA CA0E52FE07CA0E52FE08CA0E52FE09CA75A
1220 DATA 0E52FE0ACA0E52FE0BCA0E52FE0CCA0E6A7
1230 DATA 52FE0DCA0E52FE0ECA0E52FE0FCA0E526F4
1240 DATA 3E013244527ECD5ABB233A44523C324450C
1250 DATA 52FE09CA9E51FE0CCAA651C385513E2E7E2
1260 DATA CD5ABBC385513E002B3CFE0CC2A851CD7B2
1270 DATA 7852202020556E65726173652028592F4CD
1280 DATA 4E293F0D0A00CD8752FE79CAE051FE5973C
1290 DATA CAE051FE4ECAEF51FE6ECAEF51C3C651AA1
1300 DATA 3E0077C3EF51237EFEE5CA47522BC93E7D1
1310 DATA 00324452233A44523C324452FE2020F44F1
1320 DATA 2245523A4552FE81CA1252C32B512BC3664
1330 DATA EF513A4652FEE0C22B51CD4F5021008073B
1340 DATA 1E003AB150573AB2504FDF3650D239505FB
1350 DATA 3AB250FE49CA4752FEC9CA47523C32B2830
1360 DATA 50C30551000000CD1A500D0A54686174448
1370 DATA 7320616C6C20666F6C6B732121210D0A485
1380 DATA 00CD4F502100801E003AB150573AB2504F9
1390 DATA 4FDF3650D23950C9228552E17ECD5ABB812
1400 DATA 23B720F8E900002A8552CD06BBC90000633 ●
```

Just room to let you know that *every Type-In* we print is paid for, and £10 is the absolute minimum. (A really mega-prog like Giles Park's 'Easibase' is worth much nearer £100 than a miserly tenner, though.) Send your tape or disk – and a print-out if you possibly can – to:

Type-Ins, Amstrad Action
4 Queen St, Bath BA1 1EJ

The listing must be all your own original unpublished work.

Say whether you wish your program to be placed in the Public Domain, and if you'd like it returned enclose an SAE.

THE BUYERS GUIDE TO ADVENTURES

The complete list of every adventure ever reviewed in these hallowed pages, compiled with the valuable assistance of Glen Baldwin ***(the cheque's in the post)***

Adventure	Software House	Rating	Issue	Page
Acheton	Topologika	69	29	60
After Shock	Interceptor	69	15	87
Al-Strad	Rhinosoft	68	6	75
Apache Gold	Incentive	58	17	79
Archers, The	Mosaic/Level 9	60	16	51
Ashkeron	Mirrorsoft	70	2	79
Ballyhoo	Infocom	89	9	75
Beer Hunter, The	Global Software	62	7	79
Bestiary	Perry Williams	75	21	80
Black Fountain/Sharpe's Deeds	Incentive	58	23	60
Boggit, The	CRL	80	13	58
Bugsy	CRL/St.Brides	69	16	52
Bureaucracy	Infocom/Activision	89	22	66
Countdown To Doom	Topologika	59	26	69
Die You Vicious Fish	Rhinosoft	61	18	62
Dodgy Geezers	Melborne House	50	18	62
Dracula	CRL	48	17	80
Dungeons,Amethysts,Alc.	Atlantis	65	23	61
Escape From Khoshima	Atlantis	75	21	80
Fourmost Adventures	Global Software	85	8	78
Gnome Ranger	Level 9	60	28	81
Growing Pains Of Adrian Mole	Virgin/Mosaic/Level 9	75	19	77
Guild Of Thieves	Magnetic Scrolls	89	29	60
Hitchhikers Guide To Galaxy	Infocom	93	5	70
Hollywood Hijinx	Infocom/Activision	90	20	64
Hunchback-The Adventure	Ocean	70	12	71
Ice Station Zero	Eighth Day	49	4	82
Imagination	Firebird	75	19	79
Ingrid's Back	Level 9	82	38	68
Island Of Riddles	Redbeard	58	3	81
Jinxter	Magnetic Scrolls	88	30	60
Knight Orc	Level 9/Rainbird	84	28	80
Kwah!	Melbourne House	69	16	51
Lancelot	Level 9	80	38	67
Last Believer,The	Paul Lucas	N/A	25	66
Leather Goddesses Of Phobos	Infocom/Activision	91	15	87
Lord Of The Rings	Melborne House	85	6	72
Lost Phirious-Part 1,The	Vidipix	55	8	78
Lost Phirious-Part 2,The	Vidipix	59	10	73
Lurking Horror	Infocom	94	27	73
Magic Cottage	Stuart Lockey	N/A	25	65
Magicians Ball,The	Global	80	4	81
Mandragore	Infrogrames	70	12	70
Mansion	Central Solutions	41	7	80
Mindshadow	Activision	75	3	81
Monsters Of Murdac	Global Software	75	11	68
Mordon's Quest	Melbourne House	78	2	80
Mountains Of Ket/Top Secret	Incentive	55	23	60
Murder on the Atlantic	Infogrames	45	22	67
Never Ending Story, The	Ocean	82	4	80
North Sea Bullion Adventure	Kuma	25	1	40
Old Scores	Global Software	89	11	68
Pawn,The	Magnetic Scrolls	92	19	76
Philosophers Quest	Topologika	58	26	71
Price Of Magik	Level 9	88	10	71
Rebel Planet	U.S. Gold	N/A	14	68
Red Moon	Level 9	90	1	39
Redhawk	Melbourne House	58	9	75
Return To Doom	Topologika	70	36	59
Return To Oz	US Gold	28	15	89
Rick Hanson, Special Agent	Robico	52	24	41
Robin Of Sherwood	Adventure Int.	68	2	78
Robin Of Sherwood	CRL	77	10	72
Runestone	Firebird	80	6	75
Seabase Delta	Firebird	85	10	72
Seas Of Blood	Adventure Int.	78	4	81
Secret Diary Of Adrian Mole	Mosiac/Level 9	80	3	78
Secret Of St.Bride's, The	Audiogenic/St.Bride's	62	7	80
Shadow Of The Bear	Kuma	25	1	40
Shadows Of Mordor	Melbourne House	81	21	79
Shymer	Sandra Sharkey	65	30	61
Silicon Dreams	Rainbird	88	17	78
Smugglers Cove	CRL	62	1	40
Souls Of Darkon	Taskset	58	3	79
Spy Trek	Americana	69	11	72
Stationfall	Infocom	90	27	73
Subsunk	Firebird	65	1	40
Terrormolinos	Melborne House	77	3	81
Time And Magik	Level 9/Mandarin	92	34	59
Tomb Of Kuslak	Intrigue Software	22	3	79
Treasure Tunnels	Plasma Touch	65	9	77
Twice Shy	Mosaic/RamJam	68	16	52
Venom	Mastertronic	60	29	61
Very Big Cave Adventure, The	CRL	76	10	73
Warlord	Interceptor	70	2	79
Winter Wonderland	Incentive	55	17	80
Wishbringer	Infocom	92	9	77
Worm In Paradise,The	Level 9	87	5	66
Zork 1	Infocom	86	5	71

Don't miss the next *AMSTRAD ACTION*-packed issue – out on *FEBRUARY 9th!*

AAfterthought

And now for something completely different...

The CPC character set

2. The club secretary



Now in a state somewhere between semi- and complete retirement, the Club Secretary is the nominal Director of a local company, though his services are no longer greatly in demand.

He has recently become totally obsessed with the idea of using his 6128 to put his life in order. Perhaps it's because it does as it's told without answering back?

This curious monomania began with little things – writing the odd letter to his local newspaper, for instance. He then, of course, needed a printer to put this literary masterpiece onto paper. (The letter, which pointed out that waste-bins in beauty spots attracted a great deal of rubbish. Doubtless the fault of that ignorant buffoon the editor.) It then progressed to cataloguing his stamp collection using his database and very soon spiralled out of control. There is now little hope.

He even puts his shopping lists and notes to the milkman on it. The surest sign that the bug has really bitten, however, is that he even does home accounts on his CPC. He was once involved in a dispute with his bank manager over £1.50 interest charged over three months. Eventually it was returned, and ever since has referred to it as the great proof that all his effort is not wasted.

Sometimes he feels persecuted, and approaches despair. Why should it be his sole responsibility to hire the hall, bring along the equipment, set it up, organise the guest speaker, speak when the guest speaker fails to appear, arrange the refreshments, and remind people that they haven't paid this year's subs – or indeed last year's, come to mention it. And if he were even to mention the number of hours he'd spent doing the club accounts...

He objects to games players but above all to hackers. If an ingenious individual hacked his way into the Pentagon defence system he would be outraged at their social irresponsibility. By contrast he feels a respect verging on awe at anyone who's managed to program a computer to, say, deal a hand at cards.

Next month's member in the CPC character set is the technical type

Avoid the queues!

To the newsagent: *Amstrad Action is distributed by Seymour Press*

Dear newsagent,
Please reserve me one copy of the March *Amstrad Action*, due out on 9 February

Name:

Address:

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If you're under 18, please get your parent or guardian's to sign here:



Yes folks, that's it for another month. There is no more. Still, hang on just four short weeks (can you wait?) and we'll be back with another action-packed *Amstrad Action*. Once again we don't want to say too much about what's in it, because all the other mags will nick it (ho ho. Real reason: haven't the faintest).

And if you've been having probems getting your hands on a copy, why not reserve one? Your newsagent will be ever so glad to oblige. Just hand him this reservation slip and make life a little easier.

ADVERTISERS INDEX

Your CPC is alive. To make sure it's kicking subscribe to *Amstrad Action*. Now!

What's really going on in the CPC world? How do you know if you're really getting the most out of your CPC? How do you get hold of the best **bargains?** Get all the best **advice,** plus **tactics** and games **hints, pokes** and help which adds **new life** to your existing software collection and lets you make your future choices wisely: news, features, comms, the letters pages (!) - all this by subscribing to *Amstrad Action.*

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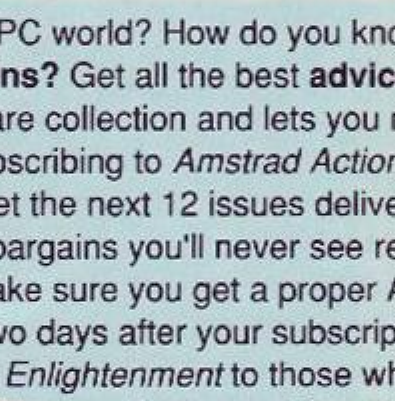
But that's not all. To make sure you get a proper AA kick-off we're giving away one of these four amazing games - your copy will arrive two days after your subscription order. But there's more! In a moment of **pure folly** we're throwing in a copy of Firebird's *Enlightenment* to those who choose tape rather than disk! In other words, subscribe, pick a game from the four listed below. If you want it on tape, you get *Enlightenment* thrown in **free!** We can't do more than that for you. But you have to want that machine to **come alive.** Contact us on (0458) 74011 or fill in the order form on the next page.

Do it now!

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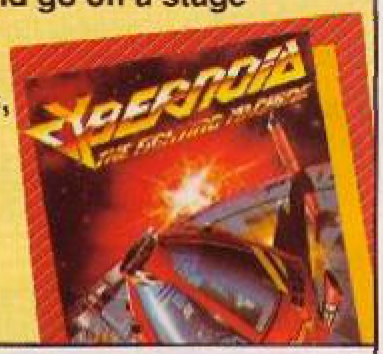
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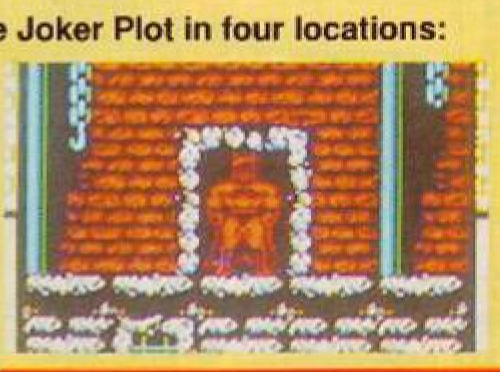
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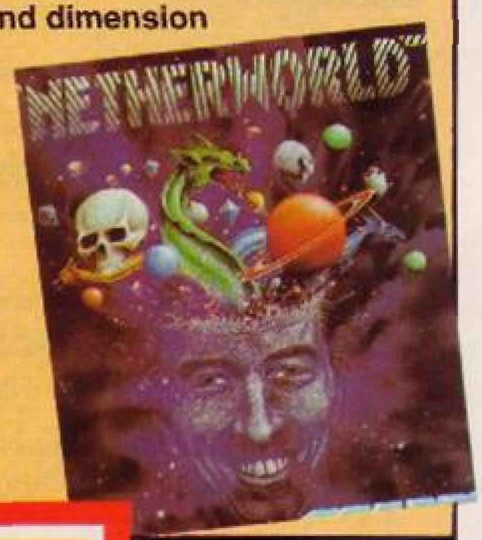
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Just released, and an exclusive release to Amstrad Action readers only (no other magazine met CP Software's stringent professional standards apart from us!). A super program for anyone who wants to have the big four board games in one go. This one will last longer than two weeks after Christmas! Don't-miss it!

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ATLAST PLUS

CPC6128 CP/M database now £29.95 (RRP £39.95)

"Superb value for money and hard to pick holes in" we called the first version of *AtLast*. Now, with the release of*AtLast Plus* by Rational Solutions, you have the chance of buying one of the best (and probably *the* best for the 6128) databases for £29 - £10 less than the full retail price!

AtLast Plus handles up to 32,000 records, ten files per database, 20 fields per record, 99 elements per field and up to 79 characters per element. User-definable report and screen layouts, full on-screen control of data entry, impressive indexing/sorting facilities and automatic data re-organisation are all included in this latest version.

The package includes disk and full 120 page manual - altogether one of the most suitable programs for organising club-type membership lists, and unbeatable value for money - only through *Amstrad Action*.

Order Code AA360

MINI OFFICE II
£12.95 tape £17.95 disk (RRP £14.95/£19.95)



Database's combined word processor, database, spreadsheet, label printer, communications and graphics package and offers the best value for money in any eight-bit integrated package.

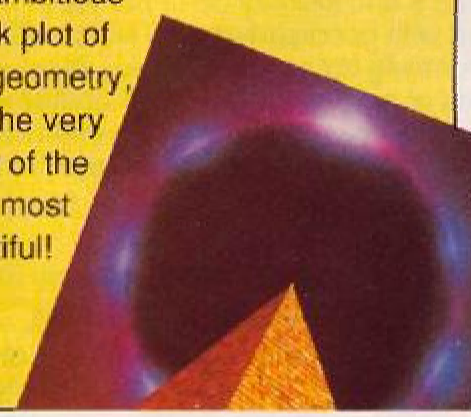
Suitable for any CPC (it doesn't run under CP/M), AA called Mini Office 'good enough to fulfil the entire software needs of many a small business!'. That is borne out by the sales figures - more than 400,000 users across the country.

The figures testify to the features. You can build a verstaile card index, produce pie charts, access Prestel and other comms networks and run off personalised letters. Altogether, you may never need any other program once you've got Mini Office II. Time to get serious?

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TOTAL ECLIPSE
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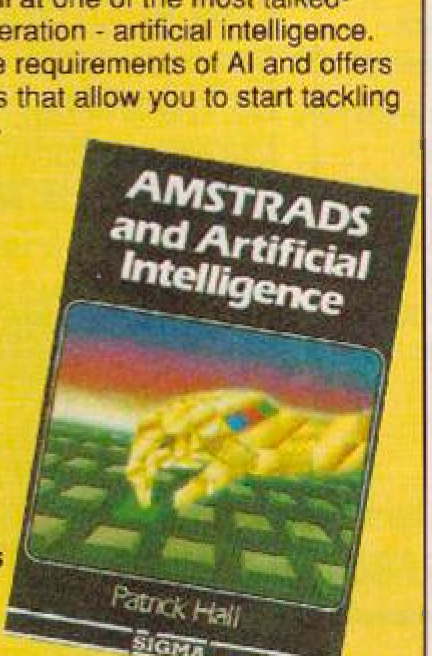
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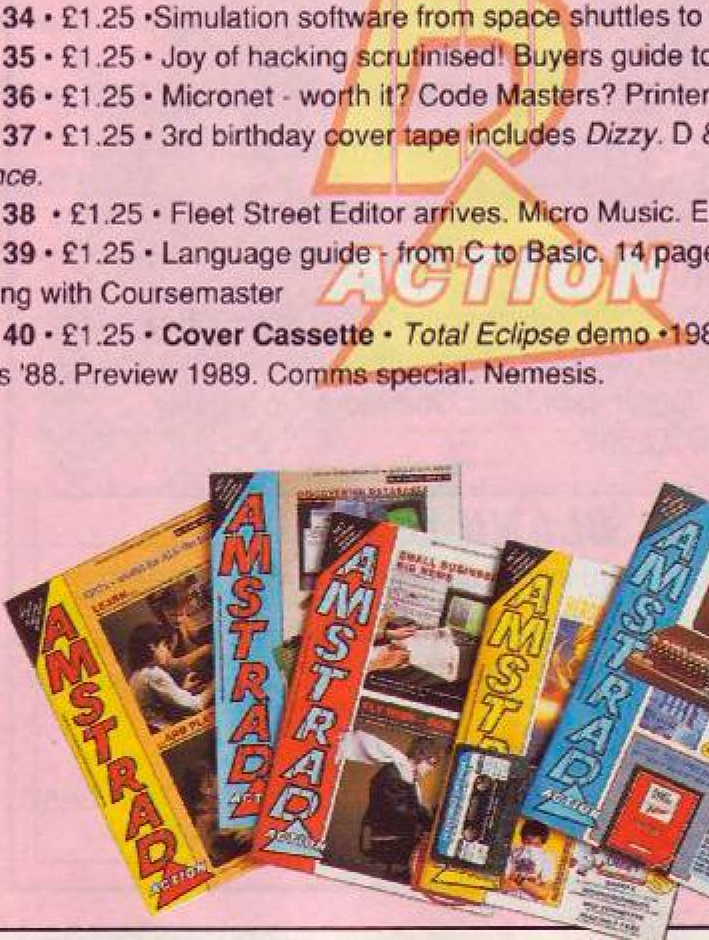
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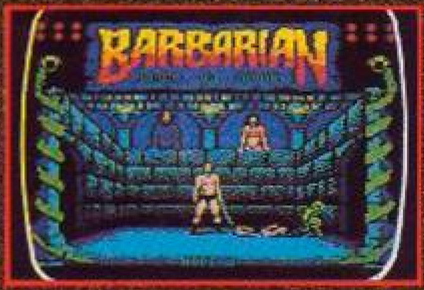
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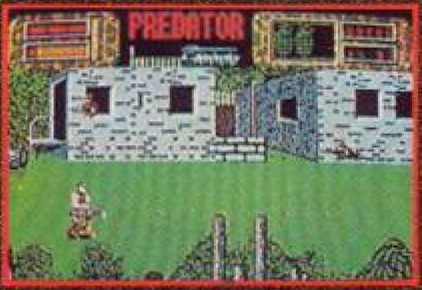
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